

# Salafi Vs Ashari-Maturidi Aqeedah

## Is There Any Basic Difference Between Them?

All the School of thought, Groups, Organizations, Madarsa, Islamic Movement, and Scholars of the Muslim world belong to any one of these three Aqeedah Schools.

(Except Shia Brothers .We don't know anything about Shias)

Because of many personal and peripheral issues the orators of groups present an exaggerated picture of differences in Aqeedah. In Reality there is no basic difference between them.

But it has been made so complicated that it is very difficult to understand this point. Still there is no harm in trying to understand it. This essay contains the basic material for its understanding.  
May Allah help the ummah (Ameen)

For general Muslims the best way is to read and believe the Aqeedah from any salafus salehin Aqeedah book like Aqeedatut Tahawiah that is unanimously accepted and authentic book of Aqeedah. This is of only 20-25 pages. This is enough to answer all the questions of Aqeedah on day of judgment. They should not enter into any difference.  
Jazakalla.

**Fazilatus Shaykh Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi R.A.**

This book is actually two chapters of the Translation of  
Syed Abul hasan Ali Nadvi Book

# Saviors of Islamic Sprit Vol 1

(Original Urdu work)

## *Tareekh e Dawat O Azeemat*

For the benefit of common Muslims it is being presented separately.

Jazakallah o Khair for the writer, the translator, and for persons of Shaykh Nadvi  
Centre <http://abulhasanalinadwi.org/index.html> for making soft copy available on internet.  
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Original English translation is available on Website on following link.

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Presented By

Dr. Syed Abu Tooba

[Abutooba1@gmail.com](mailto:Abutooba1@gmail.com)

**CAMPAIGN AGAINST GROUPEISM (CAG)**

**CAMPAIGN FOR REVIVAL OF ISLAMIC ETHICS OF  
DISAGREEMENT (CRIED)**

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**In Appendix**

Arabic Text and English Translation of Aqeedatut Tahawia taken with Jazakallah  
from [central-mosque.com](http://www.central-mosque.com)

<http://www.central-mosque.com/index.php/Beliefs/belieftahawiyah.html>

## CHAPTER IV

### AHMAD IBN HANBAL

#### **Metaphysics :**

Muslims became conversant with the Greek intellectual patrimony in the beginning of the second century A. H. The philosophical thought of the Greeks was nothing more than an intellectual sophistry and a play upon words devoid of any content of reality. The concepts and ideas of man, limited as they are, find expression in his language which is wholly inadequate to delineate the nature and attributes of the Limitless Being. The nature of God, His attributes, His creativeness, and similar other questions do not admit of an analysis and experimentation similar to those of tangible objects nor yet of a rational explanation, if only, because man does not possess the rudimentary knowledge or the basic precepts and experiences in regard to these matters, while the entire structure of his thoughts, ideas and imagination rests on sensory perceptions. Divine revelation through His apostles is, in reality, the only means of acquiring knowledge with certitude in this respect, for it can alone provide mankind with the gnosis of Supreme Being and His attributes. Trust in the prophets, therefore, bespeaks of prudence and sound intellect. Muslims possessed the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah* which provided an answer to all intellectual and spiritual questions and left no excuse for plunging into philosophical speculations. The companions of the Prophet, their successors, jurists and traditionists had all taken the same stand. Also, Muslims were in the beginning too much occupied with the dissemination of their faith, the conquests that had brought to the fore numerous problems relating to affairs of private and social

life which had to be patterned in accordance with the ethical norms of Islam, and the compilation of religious sciences. However, with the translation of Greek and Syriac works and a close contact with the scholastics, philosophers and scholars of other peoples, a section of the Muslims began to take interest in the so-called rational and intellectual interpretation of the revealed truth. These people, not content with a realistic and direct answer available in the Scriptures to the spiritual questions, which was in fact more satisfying to an intellect, deep and well-grounded, were attracted by the sophism of philosophical speculation. And the result of their endeavours was that futile controversies pertaining to the nature and attributes of God, eternal or accidental nature of His word, vision of God through corporeal eyes, predestination and free-will were started, although these were neither necessary for theological purposes nor had any utility for cultural or social advancement. These discussions had definitely a dissolving influence on the solidarity of the *Ummah* and were injurious to its grit and tenacity.

### **Mu'tazilism :**

The Mu'tazilites, at the head of this group of religious philosophers, were regarded as rationalists and dialecticians since they had made philosophical speculation a touchstone of faith and apostasy. They endeavoured, with all the wits at their command, to reconcile religion with philosophy, faith with the so-called reason, while jurists and traditionists, on the other hand adhered to doctrinal tenets of their predecessors and considered these quibblings not only futile but harmful for the *Ummah*. *'Inzāl* did not take root till the reign of Harūn al-Rashīd but in the time of Mamūn, who was very much impressed with the Greek thought and its rationalism owing to his upbringing and for certain other reasons, the star of the Mu'tazilites rose on the horizon. Ibn Abī Duwād an ardent propagator of *'Inzāl* and the Chief Justice of the 'Abbāsīd Empire, exerted his influence to make it a state religion. Mamūn, who was himself a zealous exponent of the Mu'tazilite school, had the impatience of a youth and the

obstinacy of an autocrat sovereign<sup>1</sup> He made it possible for the Mu'tazilites to exercise undue influence over the whole empire

The doctrine of the creation of the Qur'ān<sup>2</sup> was held as the basic tenet of the Mu'tazilite school which was sought to be enforced by invoking the power and influence of the state, and was made a criterion for determining one's apostasy or adherence to the true faith This brought forth a vehement opposition from the traditionists with Ahmad ibn Hanbal spearheading the opposition movement

#### Ahmad ibn Hanbal :

Ahmad ibn Hanbal was born at Baghdad in the month of Rab'ī ul-Awwal, 164 A. H He came of an Arab tribe, 'Shaiban,' which was renowned for its courage and endurance, grit and vigour<sup>3</sup> His grandfather, Hanbal ibn Hilāl had

- 1 A few examples of his rashness are furnished by his declaration of the preference of 'Alī over the first three Caliphs and of the validity of marriages contracted for a limited period which caused considerable resentment among the masses He had afterwards to retrace his steps on the intervention of Yahya ibn Aktham (*Zuhā Islam*, Vol III, p 165 and *Ibnū Taifur*, p 45)
- 2 The controversy in a regard to the creation of Qur'ān—its being created or being eternal—was entirely a philosophical speculation, which, even according to the Mu'tazilite historians, served only to shake the faith in the divine origin of the Qur'ān Traditionists, holding the interpretations of the Mu'tazilite school to be wrong and harmful for the *Ummah*, opposed them The Mu'tazilites are commonly regarded as rationalists and progressive but they proved to be the most turbulent sectarians since they endeavoured to stifle all opposition to their creed They filled the entire world of Islam with a rancour and fanned the flame of hatred between different sections of the populace The manner in which they dealt with their opponents is reminiscent of the courts of Inquisition set up by the Christian Church during the Medieval Ages for the repression of the liberal thinkers, and which ultimately gave a death blow to 'Itizāl.
- 3 The famous Commander of Caliph Abū Bakr, Muthanna ibn Hāritha belonged to the same tribe

migrated from Basra to Khurasan and was appointed as Governor of Sarakhsh under the Umayyads but he was sympathetic to the 'Abbāsīd propaganda to supplant Banī Hashim, the descendants of the Prophet, in place of the Umayyads. After his father's death, his mother migrated to Baghdad where Ahmad was born. Although placed in straitened circumstances, his mother took pains to provide him with the best possible education. Ahmad too, being at the end of his tether, learnt to be industrious and patient, resolute and self-restrained. He committed the Qur'ān to memory when still young, studied literature for some time and then enlisted in an office to gain proficiency in the penmanship.

Ahmad was virtuous and of clear conscience from his very childhood. His uncle held the post of an official reporter at Baghdad and used to send despatches to his superiors about the affairs of the city. Once he handed over a bundle of his despatches to Ahmad for being delivered to a courier, but Ahmad threw these away in the river as he thought that these would be containing secret reports about certain persons. While he was working as an apprentice in the correspondence-office, many house-wives whose husbands were out on military duty came to get their letters read out to them and replies written on their behalf. Ahmad would oblige them but he would never write anything which he considered to be undignified or against the *Shari'ah*. It was on account of these distinctive qualities that a foreseeing individual (Haitham ibn Jamil) had predicted that if "the youngman remained alive, he would be a model for his compatriots"<sup>1</sup>

In religious sciences, Ahmad paid special attention to the Traditions. In the beginning he took notes of the Traditions from Abū Yūsuf<sup>2</sup> and then studied for four years under a famous traditionist of Baghdad, Haitham ibn Bashir<sup>3</sup> (d. 182 A. H.).

1 *Tarjumatul Imām*, p. 16

2 *Manāqib Imām Ahmad*, p. 23

3 *Ibid*, p. 23



During this period he also received education from ‘Abdūr Rahman ibn Mahdī, Abū Bakr ibn ‘Ayyāsh and a few other reputed teachers of *hadith*. He was such an industrious and avid student that often he wanted to leave the home for his studies so early in the morning that his mother had to beg him to wait till the call for the morning prayer was heard and the darkness had at least faded away.

After completing his education at Baghdad he set out for Basra, Hijaz, Yaman, Syria and al-Jazīrah for attending the lectures of the reputed doctors of Tradition in these places.

Ahmad ibn Hanbal met Muhammad ibn Idrīs al-Shāfi‘ī in 187 A H while on his first visit to Hijaz<sup>1</sup>. He again met al-Shāfi‘ī afterwards in Baghdad when the latter had elaborated the science of jurisprudence into a regular system and developed the doctrine of *ym‘ā*. Ahmad had too acquired such a proficiency by then that al-Shāfi‘ī used to depend on him in regard to the authenticity of the Traditions and often asked Ahmad to enlighten him in this regard.

Ahmad wanted to set off for Ray in Iran for attending the lectures of a reputed traditionist, Jarīr ibn ‘Abdul Hamīd but could not go because of the paucity of funds. He often regretted that if he had even ninety *dirhams* he would have left for Ray. Another incident indicating his high-spiritedness in acquiring the knowledge of Traditions has been related by the annalists. In 198 A H he decided to repair to Hijaz and then, after performing the Hajj, to San‘ā in Yaman for listening the Traditions from ‘Abdur Razzaq ibn Humām. One of his class-mates, Yahyā ibn Ma‘een, also promised to accompany him. However, when they were encompassing the Ka‘bah, they happened to meet ‘Abdur Razzaq ibn Humām. Ibn Ma‘een paid his respects to ‘Abdur Razzaq and introduced Ahmad to him. He also made a request to give them some time for learning the Traditions for him. When ‘Abdur Razzaq had left, Ahmad told Ibn Ma‘een that it was not befitting for them to take advantage of the Sheikh’s

1. Ibn Hambal, p 33

presence in Mecca to listen the Traditions from him. Although Ibn Ma<sup>c</sup>cen pleaded that it was a boon from God that the Sheikh's presence in Mecca had saved them from a lengthy journey of two months and the attendant hardships and expenditure, Ahmad refused to listen the Traditions from 'Abdu<sup>r</sup> Razzaq without having undertaken the journey to San<sup>c</sup>ā. He said · "I would feel ashamed before God, if I break the journey undertaken with the intention of learning the Traditions I would go to San<sup>c</sup>ā and attend the Sheikh's lectures there" After the Hajj was over, he repaired to San<sup>c</sup>ā and listened the Traditions handed down through al-Zuhri and ibn al-Mussayyib from 'Abdur Razzaq.<sup>1</sup> In due course of time he acquired a high reputation for his profound knowledge, particularly for his erudition with respect to the precepts, actions and sayings of the Prophet, of which he could repeat over a million. Despite his vast knowledge and prodigious memory, he had a high regard for al-Shafe<sup>c</sup>i's intelligence, grasp and deductive method of reasoning He used to say of al-Shafe<sup>c</sup>i "I have not seen anyone like him". Ahmad learnt the rules of jurisprudence from al-Shafe<sup>c</sup>i and later developed his own doctrine of uncompromising adherence to the text of the Traditions as a source of law Ultimately he rose to be an eminent theologian and jurist, and the founder of one of the four schools of Islamic jurisprudence, which still has adherents in many parts of the Islamic world. Al-Shafe<sup>c</sup>i too held Ahmad ibn Hanbal in high esteem While leaving Baghdad al-Shafe<sup>c</sup>i had remarked "I am leaving Baghdad when there is none more pious and a greater jurist than Ahmad ibn Hanbal".<sup>2</sup>

Ahmad ibn Hanbal began his discourses on Traditions in 204 A.H , at the age of forty<sup>3</sup> This was perhaps God ordained or a re-echo of the Prophet's call to Islam since he had been graced with the prophethood at that age Quite a large number of persons used to attend his lectures Annalists report that five

1 Ibn-Kathir, Vol X, pp 326-27 and *Manāqib Imām Ahmad*, pp 69-70

2 *Tarjumatul Imām*, p 16

3 Ibn Hanbal, pp 33



thousand or more persons attended his lectures out of which about five hundred used to take down his discourses. People listened to Ahmad ibn Hanbal in pin drop silence for no body could dare to talk or do anything unseemly of the respect of Traditions. The poor were given preference over the rich in his lectures. Al-Zahabi quotes Maiwazi, a contemporary of Ahmad ibn Hanbal, as follows

“I have not seen the poor and lowly being shown more deference anywhere than in the lectures of Ahmad, who used to be attentive to the poor and indifferent to the affluent. He was a man of towering dignity, of simple habits yet grave and never hasty, his countenance signified a weightiness and sublimity. He used to arrive for his lectures after *Asr* prayers, but remained quiet till he was requested to speak.”<sup>1</sup>

Ahmad ibn Hanbal was extremely simple in his habits and led an almost ascetic life like the mentors of the old. He never accepted any gift or present offered by the Caliphs or the grandees. If his sons ever asked the reason for refusing these presents, he explained that the offerings were perfectly lawful and even Hajj could be performed from that money. He refused to accept these not because of it being prohibited but owing to the dictates of prudence. He managed to meet his expenses from the income of his ancestral fief or from his own earnings but despite his being financially hard-pressed he was very large-hearted and generous. He often said that if the entire world became a morsel in the hands of any Muslim who fed another Muslim with it, this would not be lavishness. He was not charitable in respect of wealth alone but exhibited the same virtue even when his own-self was involved. Once a man abused and denounced him but soon came back to repent and offer his apology. Ahmad replied that he had already forgiven him before leaving the place where the incident had occurred. After enduring the tortures in connexion with his stand on the eternity of the Qurʾān, he forgave

1. *Tarjumatul Imām*, p 35, and *Hilyatul Auliya*, Vol IX, p 165

all those who were involved in his sufferings including the Caliph under whose orders he had been severely scourged. He used to say "I cannot pardon the innovator in religion but excepting him everyone who took part in my victimisation has been pardoned by me". Often he said, "What advantage would anyone derive if a Muslim was scourged in Hell because of him?"

An incident illustrating the over-flowing charity and kindly disposition of Ahmad ibn Hanbal has been related by Ahmad Qattān al-Baghdādī who says that long after the wounds inflicted by the flogging had been healed, Ahmad ibn Hanbal often had a shooting pain in his back which was caused by a growth developed as a result of the severe scourging. The physician who had treated Ahmad ibn Hanbal told al-Baghdādī that while examining Ahmad when he pressed the spot where the latter had pain, Ahmad simply said "I seek the refuge of God from it". Similarly, when the physician opened the spot to remove the concussion, Ahmad continued to seek forgiveness for Mu'tasim till the operation was over. After dressing the wound the physician asked Ahmad ibn Hanbal "Abū 'Abdullah, when people have to face a calamity on account of someone else, they normally accurse him but you were invoking divine blessings for Mu'tasim?" "I too thought of it", replied Ahmad, "but Mu'tasim is a descendant of the Prophet's uncle and I do not want to cherish a feud with one of the relatives of the Prophet when I face him on the Day of Judgement. I, therefore, decided to forgo my claim against him"<sup>1</sup>

Despite his high reputation and profound knowledge, never a word of self-praise was heard from him. One of his associates, Yahyā ibn Ma'een says

"I have not seen a man like Ahmad. I had been associated with him for fifty years but he never showed off his erudition"<sup>2</sup>

1 *Randha-tul-'Uqla*, pp 156-57

2 *Hilyatul Awliya*, Vol IX p 181

Modest as he was, Ahmad never liked to mention his lineage although he descended from a celebrated Arab tribe, and that was considered to be a great honour in those days. Al-Zahabi has recorded an incident related by one of Ahmad's compatriots which throws light on his singular humility.

“‘Arim Abū-No‘amān says . Ahmad ibn Hanbal had asked me to keep some funds in deposit out of which he used to draw amounts in accordance with his needs. Once I said : ‘Abū ‘Abdullah, I know you are an Arab.’ To this he replied . ‘What ! we are destitutes.’ I insisted on a reply but he evaded the answer”.<sup>1</sup>

After the persecution Ahmad ibn Hanbal had to undergo for his stand on the question of the creation of Qur‘ān, he obtained so high a reputation for his sanctity that countless people offered prayers for divine blessings on him. Ahmad ibn Hanbal, however, felt terribly worried and uncertain. Once Marwazi, one of his disciples, told him : “A large number of people solemnly invoke the divine blessings on you.”

“How do you say so ?”, Ahmad exclaimed, “I actually fear punishment in the shape of divine benefits that are sometimes conferred on ungrateful sinners”.

Marwazi replied, “A man has come from Tarsūs who says that he was present on a battle-field in Rūm<sup>2</sup> when he heard suddenly cries raised from every nook and corner of the place imploring benediction in your favour. He further relates that the soldiers fired ballistas as if on your behalf and once it so happened that when a ballista was thus fired, the missile hit an enemy taking position behind a cover on the wall of the fort, cleanly blowing away both the cover and the head of the enemy”.

Horrified on hearing this, Ahmad exclaimed, “O God, let this not be a delusive favour from Thee.”<sup>3</sup>

1. *Tarjumatul Imām*, p 22.

2. The land of the Byzantians.

3. *Tarjumatul Imām*, p 21

Very often non-Muslims came to meet him from distant places. A Christian physician once visited him in connexion with his treatment. He said, "I wanted to meet you since a long time. You are a blessing not for the Muslims alone but for all the human beings. All of our friends and co-religionists have similar feelings for you".

When the physician had left, Marwazi said, "I hope that the entire Muslim world would be beseeching divine blessings for you".

Ahmad, however, replied, "When a man happens to know his worth, no adulation can deceive him."<sup>1</sup>

Notwithstanding his profound humility, Ahmad ibn Hanbal had been endowed with a personality so solemn and overbearing that even the state officials, administrators and soldiers felt over-awed in his presence and could not help paying respect to him. An eye-witness reports that he had been to the Governor of Baghdad Is'haq ibn Ibrāhīm, and several other high-ranking officers but he did not find anyone so domineering as Ahmad ibn Hanbal. He says that he wanted to seek certain clarifications from Ahmad but he found himself in a flutter—the blood knocking in his temples, he was unable to speak in the presence of Ahmad. A reputed traditionist Ibrahim al-Harbi (d. 285 A.H.) says :

"I have seen Ahmad ibn Hanbal. It seemed as if his heart was a repository of all the knowledge vouchsafed to human beings, past and present ; he brought forth whatever he wanted and held back what he did not desire to divulge."<sup>2</sup>

Ahmad ibn Hanbal led a life so simple and frugal that it was envied even by the ascetics. The reign of the first three 'Abbāsīd sovereigns of his time, Mamūn, Mu'tasim and Wāthiq, constituted a trial for Ahmad since each one of these was bent on putting

1 *Tarjumatul Imām*, pp 21/22

2. *Ibid* , p 16, and *Manaqib Imām Ahmad*, p 15

him to harm Wāthiq was succeeded by Mutawakkil in 232 A H who held Ahmad in high esteem, but Ahmad was far more afraid of him since he took the favours of the Caliph as a temptation to evil. Often he said that he was able to withstand the sufferings inflicted by the earlier Caliphs, but in his old age, he had to face another trial which was far more severe. The respect and deference, favours and gifts of Mutawakkil could not, however, make any inroad into the contentedness and resignation of Ahmad just as the threats and sufferings at the hands of earlier Caliphs had failed to deter him from the path enjoined by the *Sunnah* of the Prophet. Once Mutawakkil sent him a donkey-load of gold-pieces but he refused to accept the same. The man who had brought the present insisted on his accepting the money and implored that the Caliph would take ill if the present was refused. At last Ahmad consented to let the bag being placed in a corner. Ahmad, however, called on his uncle late in the night and asked him to advise as to what he should do with the money since he deeply regretted that he had accepted the present, and could not sleep on account of it. His uncle advised him to wait at least till the day-break and then to dispose it of in the manner he liked best. Early next morning Ahmad collected his trusted disciples and associates and asked them to prepare a list of the poor and indigent persons. He distributed the entire amount and then gave away the bag to a destitute.<sup>1</sup>

Ahmad ibn Hanbal remained a royal guest, on the insistence of Caliph Mutawakkil, for a few days. During this period he was served with sumptuous dishes, which were estimated to cost one hundred and twenty *dirhams* per day. Ahmad, however, did not touch the food and kept fasting continuously for eight days. He became too weak, and, as it is reported, if the Caliph had not sent him back soon thereafter, he would have probably died.<sup>2</sup> 'Abdullah, Ahmad's son, says that his father remained with the Caliph for sixteen days. During this period he took only a little

1 *Tarjumatul Imām*, p. 60

2 *Ibid*, p. 61.

parched grain reduced into paste Mutawakkil had sanctioned stipends for the sons of Ahmad. One of his sons reports that prior to their being stipendiaries, Ahmad had no objection to accepting anything from them but he completely discontinued the practice thereafter. Once, when Ahmad was ill, a physician prescribed water extracted from parched pumpkin for him. Ahmad was advised by someone to get the pumpkin parched in the oven of his son Saleh which happened to be burning at the time, but Ahmad refused to do so.<sup>1</sup> Although he was extremely cautious for his own self, he still felt uneasy in regard to the stipends received by his sons, and ultimately he told Saleh: "I want that you should forego the allowance for you are getting it on account of me"

Ahmad fell seriously ill at the age of 77. The number of people who daily came to see him was so large according to the chroniclers of his time that all the streets of the Bazar near his house were overcrowded and police had to be posted there to control the traffic.<sup>2</sup> Ahmad was suffering from haematuria and the reason attributed to his illness by the physicians was that grief and anxiety had produced an ulcer in his stomach.<sup>3</sup> Marwazi says that Ahmad's condition deteriorated on Thursday. Although he had unbearable pain, Ahmad asked Marwazi to help him perform the ablution. He was so particular about it that he instructed Marwazi to pass his fingers between the toes. On Friday night Ahmad's malady grew still worse and he died the next day, on Friday, the 12th of Rab'ul-Awwal, 241 A H.<sup>4</sup>

### Dispute regarding the Nature of the Qur'ān :

Caliph al-Mamūn applied himself vigorously to the task of spreading the doctrine of the Mu'tazilites about the nature of the

1 *Tarjumatul Imām* pp 63/64.

2 *Ibid*, p 77.

3 *Ibid* p 77.

4 *Tarīkh-i-Kabīr*, Vol II, Part I, p 6; *Tarīkh-i-Saghir*, p 244; and *Tarjumatul-Imām*, p 76



Qur'ān, who held it to be a creature rather than an eternal word of God. In Mamūn's judgment, any deviation from this doctrine was worse than treason, and therefore, he issued a detailed mandate to the Governor of Baghdad in 218 A H severely criticising the dogmatism of the populace, particularly traditionists. He described them as noisy and turbulent sectarians lacking in true faith, unreliable witnesses and reactionaries of the *Ummah*. He ordered that all those officials who did not subscribe to the tenets expounded by him should be dismissed under intimation to him<sup>1</sup>

The royal edict was issued four months prior to the death of Mamūn. Its copies were despatched to the governors of all dominions who were instructed to summon the leading doctors and jurists, under the employ of the State, and to test them in the fundamentals of the doctrine and to dismiss those who did not accept the M'utazilite viewpoint.

Thereafter Mamūn issued another order to the Governor of Baghdad asking him to present before him seven reputed traditionists of the city who were opposed to the doctrine.<sup>2</sup> When they came, Mamūn questioned them about his dogma regarding the creation of the Qur'ān. Each one of them, either from conviction or as a matter of expediency, expressed his agreement with the views of the Caliph and was allowed to go back. They were also asked to express their views in public meetings convened for the purpose but the masses remained unaffected, holding the orthodox view.

A few days before his death, Mamūn issued a third rescript to Is'haq ibn Ibrahim, expounding the doctrine in still greater detail, and enlarging its scope to test all the doctors of religion along with the officials of the State. He made it compulsory for everyone to subscribe to the tenet. Is'haq convened a meeting of all the reputed doctors, asked their views about the royal dogma and reported back their answers to the Caliph. Mamūn was in

1 Tabrī, Vol X pp 284/93 and Ibn Taifūr pp 181/86

2 Ibn Taifūr, p 183

taken a vow that he would not execute him but have him most severely scourged and confined in a dungeon where the Sun never arose. Ahmad, however, did not yield and ultimately he was brought before Mu'tasim. The Caliph ordered Ahmad to be given thirtyfour lashes. A fresh executioner was brought after every two strokes but Ahmad said after getting each whip: "I will accept if you can bring anything from the Qur'ān or the *Sunnah* in your support"

### Ahmad's Account of His Sufferings :

Ahmad ibn Hanbal has himself given an account of his sufferings in these words :

"When I reached the place known as Bab-ul-Bustān, a horse was brought before me and I was asked to get upon it. Nobody helped me in mounting the horseback and with heavy chains fastened to my legs, I had to make many attempts. I just managed somehow to save myself from falling down in these attempts. When I reached the castle of Mu'tasim, I was thrown in a small room which was then bolted. There was no lamp in the room and after midnight when I stretched my hands to touch the dust for purification before the prayers I intended to offer, I found a tumbler full of water and a basin. I performed ablution and offered the prayers. On the next day a page took me before the Caliph. The Chief Justice, Ibn Abi Duwād, and a number of his courtiers along with Abū 'Abdur Rahmān al-Shafe'i were present there. Just before I was presented before the Caliph, two persons had been beheaded. I asked Abū 'Abdur Rahmān al-Shafe'i if he remembered what Imām al-Shafe'i had said about *Masah*.<sup>1</sup> Ibn Abi Duwād remarked on this: 'Look here! This man is to be beheaded and he is making enquiries about the canons'. In the meantime Mu'tasim asked me to come

<sup>1</sup> Ritual purification with dust in place of water, when the latter is not available or is harmful for health, for offering prayers

why do you want to get rid of your life. God knows that I have a great regard for you'.<sup>1</sup>

One, Ujaif, stroked me with the handle of his sword and exclaimed: 'You want to carry all before you' Another man remarked, 'Don't you see that the *Amir-ul-Mominin* is standing before you', while a third ejaculated, 'Oh, *Amir-ul-Mominin*, you are keeping fast and standing in the sun'. Mu'tasim repeatedly beseeched me to acknowledge his dogma but every time, I repeated my earlier reply at which he flared up and ordered to scourge me harder till I became unconscious. When I regained consciousness, I found that I had been unchained. Someone present there told me that I had been pulled down on my face and then trampled upon. However, I do not know what they had done to me"<sup>2</sup>

#### **Firmness of Ahmad ibn Hanbal :**

Ahmad ibn Hanbal was thereafter sent back to his house. He spent 28 months in imprisonment and got 34 lashes. Ibrāhīm ibn Mus'ab, one of the guards in whose custody Ahmad was kept, says that he had not seen anyone more courageous and brave than Ahmad, for he treated his guards no more than insects. Another person, Mohammad ibn Isma'il, says that he had heard from certain eye-witnesses who said that Ahmad ibn Hanbal was scourged so severely that one stroke was enough to make an elephant cry out. An eye-witness of Ahmad's scourging says that since the latter was keeping fast on the day, he said to him "The *Shari'ah* permits you to acknowledge the tenet of the Caliph in order to save your life. But Ahmad did not pay any attention to me. When he became too thirsty, he asked for some water. A

1 The chroniclers of the time report that Mu'tasim wanted to set Ahmad free, but Ibn Abi Duwad' exhorting him and said that if the Caliph forgave Ahmad, his action will be construed as going back on the policy laid down by his brother

2 Summarised from *Tarjumatul Imām*, pp 41-49

tumbler of ice-cooled water was brought which he took in his hand but returned."<sup>1</sup>

One of the sons of Ahmad relates that his father had the marks of scourging on his body when he died. Abul 'Abbās ar-Raqqi describes how certain people who wanted to save Ahmad of his sufferings, went to the prison where he was confined and recited the Tradition which allowed one placed in similar circumstances to save his life. Ahmad replied, "But what do you say of the Tradition handed down by Khabbāb which says that there were people of the old who were sawed into two but they did not renounce their faith". Those people got disappointed with the reply of Ahmad for they knew that he would go through every trial and tribulation for the sake of his faith.

#### **Achievements of Ahmad ibn Hanbal :**

The undaunted courage and steadfastness of Ahmad ibn Hanbal gave a death-blow to a sacrilege which had exposed the faith to a great danger. All those who had expressed their agreement, either from fear or expediency, with the views of the Caliphate, were exposed. All such savants were despised and held in contempt despite their erudition and learning. On the other hand, Ahmad ibn Hanbal was received by the people with the most honourable marks of distinction, and affection for him became a mark and symbol of the orthodox school of Islam. One of his compatriots, Ibn Qutaibah says :

"When you find anybody setting his affections on Ahmad ibn Hanbal, you should know that he is a follower of the *Sunnah*."<sup>2</sup>

Another doctor, Ahmad ibn Ibrāhīm ad-Dauraqī held that

"Be suspicious of the Faith of one whom you find irreverent to Ahmad"<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Tarjumatul Imām*, p 112

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, p 16

<sup>3</sup> *Tarīkh-i-Baghdād* Vol IV p 420

## CHAPTER V

### ABUL HASAN AL-AZHARI

#### The Crisis of 'Itizāl :

*Ascendancy of Mu'tazilites*--The Mu'tazilites suffered a severe set-back after the death of Mu'tasim and Wathiq, both of whom were ardent supporters of their school. Mutawakkil, the tenth 'Abbasid Caliph, succeeded his brother Wathiq in 232 A. H. He was against the Mu'tazilites and keen for the restoration of the true faith. He declared as heretic the allegedly free-thinking Mu'tazilites, expelled them from public offices and interdicted discussions on dogmatic questions by them. Yet, 'Itizāl had taken roots in the circles of the learned and the philosophers, all over the Islamic world. Although the doctrine in regard to the creation of the Qur'ān had died-out, the Mu'tazilite thought still exercised considerable influence. The Mu'tazilites continued to be vigorous owing to the eminent exponents of 'Itizāl who were well-versed in literature, dialectics, jurisprudence and other sciences, and held high offices under the State. They gained ascendancy by the middle of the third century A. H. when it was commonly held that they possessed rationalistic tendencies, were progressive thinkers and seekers after the Truth. This became the prevailing taste which was taken after by the youngmen, students and others who wanted to cut a figure. The Hanbalite school could not produce another savant of Ahmad ibn Hanbal's erudition while the traditionists and the teachers of orthodox school came to regard secular sciences as undesirable intruders into the domain of religion. The ignorance of orthodox theologians in dialectics and other secular sciences began to be regarded as their weakness with the result that the 'Itizāl acquired a predominance such as it had never gained before or after that period. It is true that all those



Abū ‘Ali al-Jubbā’ī was a successful teacher and writer but not a good debator while Abul Hasan ‘Ali al-Ash‘arī was celebrated both for his wit and eloquence. During the debates on the doctrines of ‘*uṭṭūl*, al-Jubbā’ī used to ask him to contend with the opponents of his school. Thus he soon earned a name for his mastery over the science of disputation and was recognised as a teacher of the Mu‘tazilite school of thought<sup>1</sup>. It was expected that he would succeed his god-father and mentor and prove a still more vigorous and eminent exponent of the Mu‘tazilite doctrines. God had, however, willed otherwise.

Notwithstanding the fact that al-Ash‘arī had spent his life in the advocacy of the Mu‘tazilite school whose leadership was about to fall in his lap, Providence had selected him to vindicate the *Sunnah*. He began to see through the intellectual sophistry of the Mu‘tazilite school, its quibblings and hairsplitting, and ultimately realised that the specious reasoning of the rationalists was nothing more than an intricate yet well argued spell of words, ideas and thoughts but really inconsequential in so far as the search for Truth was concerned. It dawned upon him that the source of truth lay only in revelation; the way of the teachers of the old and companions of the Prophet was the only Right Path, and that there was no reason why intellect should not submit to it. Thus getting disenchanted from the Mu‘tazilite doctrines at the age of forty, he developed an intense dislike for the so-called rationalist school. He did not come out of his house for fifteen days. On the sixteenth day he went from his house to the principal mosque of the city. It was Friday and al-Ash‘arī elbowed his way through the thronging crowd of the faithful. Going straight to the pulpit and ascending its steps he started to proclaim:

“Many of you know me. I want to tell those who do not know me that I am Abul Hasan ‘Ali al-Ash‘arī. I was a Mu‘tazilite and believed in their doctrines. Now I seek repentance from God and turn away from my earlier

1. *Tab‘een*, p 117



beliefs, henceforth, I shall endeavour to refute the doctrines of the Mu<sup>t</sup>azihtes and lay bare their mistakes and weaknesses<sup>1</sup>

And from that day on al-Ash<sup>c</sup>ari devoted himself wholeheartedly to the repudiation of the Mu<sup>t</sup>azilites and began propounding the tenets of the orthodox school. With his profound knowledge, penetrating intellect, eloquence, mastery over dialectics and a facile pen, he was able to over-shadow his disputants and uphold the doctrines of the conformist school.

### **Missionary Zeal of al-Ash<sup>c</sup>ari:**

For he considered it an obligation and a mission enjoined by God Almighty, al-Ash<sup>c</sup>ari performed the task he had taken upon himself with an untiring zeal. He used to attend the meetings of the Mu<sup>t</sup>azilites and search out rationalists to set at rest their doubts about the doctrines of the orthodox school. If anyone raised the objection as to why he met the sceptics and dissenters, who ought to be shunned, he would reply that he could not do otherwise. He explained that the Mu<sup>t</sup>azihtes were all well-placed in life, held the offices of administrators, judges, and other venerable positions, and, therefore, they could not be expected to come to him. If he too were to sit with folded hands, how would they come to know the Truth, and also that there was someone who could defend the faith with reason and arguments<sup>2</sup>

### **Achievements of al-Ash<sup>c</sup>ari:**

Al-Ash<sup>c</sup>ari was a pastmaster of debates and polemics. He had an aptitude and facility which he used with consummate skill in contending for the religion. No one was better qualified than he for the task as in his knowledge of secular sciences like logic and dialectics he excelled all the Mu<sup>t</sup>azilite doctors and could rebut their objections like a teacher answering the questions of

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1 *Tab<sup>c</sup>een*, pp 39-40 and Ibn Khallikān, Vol II, pp 446-447

2 *Tab<sup>c</sup>een*, p 116

his students One of his disciples, Abū ‘Abdullah ibn Khafīf has left an account of his first meeting with al-Ash‘arī in these words :

“I came from Shurāz to Basrā Being too keen to meet al-Ash‘arī, I enquired of his address I went to his place at a time when he was attending a debate A band of the Mu‘tazilites was then blurting out questions one after another After they had all finished their haranguing, al-Ash‘arī began his speech He took the objections raised by each, one by one, and set at rest all of their doubts When al-Ash‘arī rose from the meeting, I followed him. He asked, ‘What do you want?’ I replied, ‘I want to see how many eyes, ears and tongues have you got’ He smiled on hearing my answer”<sup>1</sup>

The same narrator adds

“I could’nt see why you kept quiet in the beginning’ said I, ‘and allowed the Mu‘tazilites to present their objections It behoved you to deliver lectures and meet their objections therein, instead of asking them to speak out first’ Al-Ash‘arī replied, ‘I do not consider it lawful even to repeat their doctrines and beliefs, but once someone has expressed these, it becomes an obligation for the righteous to refute their tenets’”<sup>2</sup>

Abul Hasan ‘Alī al-Ash‘arī was the founder of Islamic scholasticism (*kalām*) All the dialecticians of the later ages have acknowledged al-Ash‘arī’s God-gifted intelligence and sagacity, discernment and profundity Cadi Abu Bakī Baqillānī was known to his compatriots by the name of *Lisan-ul-Ummah* (Tongue of the Nation), on account of his eloquence and penmanship Once, when somebody remarked that his writings appear to excel those of al-Ash‘arī, Baqillānī replied that he considered it an honour to be able to understand al-Ash‘arī’s works<sup>3</sup>

1 *Tab‘een*, p 95

2 *Ibid* , pp 95-96

3 *Ibid* p 126

way unauthorised by God Almighty. Their interpretation is neither supported by reason nor by the Traditions handed down from the Prophet, his companions or their successors."<sup>1</sup>

Thereafter, throwing light on the canons of his own school of thought, he says :

"We have a faith in the Qur'<sup>ā</sup>n and the Traditions and, therefore, hold the opinion that these have to be followed ungrudgingly. What has been handed down by the companions, their successors and traditionists has to be accepted completely and with unquestioning submission, for this is the way of Ahmad ibn Hanbal (may God bless him and give him a goodly reward by raising him to higher and sublime regions). We shun those who do not follow the path of Ahmad, for, he was the *Imām*, pious and erudite, whom God Almighty enabled to show the path of righteousness and efface the deviations and innovations, doubts of the sceptics and interpretations of the misguided. May God glorify the adorable and venerable *Imām*."<sup>2</sup>

The achievement of al-Ash<sup>ʿ</sup>ari, however, did not consist merely of his defence of the orthodox school, for the Hanbalites and other traditionists had already been seized with the task. The most valuable accomplishment of al-Ash<sup>ʿ</sup>ari was the formulation of principles which enabled the tenets of the orthodox school to be accepted in the light of reason, i. e. on the basis of logical arguments. He examined the doctrines of the Mu<sup>ʿ</sup>tazilites and other sects in accordance with the principles of logic and the philosophical terminology evolved by these sects, and brought out their mistakes so as to uphold the beliefs and tenets of the orthodox school.

Al-Ash<sup>ʿ</sup>ari earned the displeasure of the Mu<sup>ʿ</sup>tazilites and other misguided sects, natural and inevitable as it was ; but he was also criticised by those rigid Hanbalites and traditionists who

1 *Kitāb-ul-Ībānah*, p 5

2 *Kitāb-ul-Ībānah*, p. 8

considered it a sin to discuss the issues raised by the rationalists or to use the philosophical terms for elucidating the tenets of the faith in the light of reason

Al-Ash'ari maintained that the ultimate source of faith and the key to metaphysical realities were revelation and the teachings of the Prophet rather than human reason, speculation or Grecian mythology. At the same time, he disagreed with the rigid dogmatism of the conformists who thought it prudent to keep quiet about the issues raised by the misguided sects simply because the Traditions handed down from the Prophet did not mention their terminology. Al-Ash'ari held the view that this attitude would be reckoned as a weakness of the orthodox school and would ultimately be harmful to it. Al-Ash'ari also maintained that the attitude of the rigid dogmatists would enable the Mu'tazilites and other misguided sects, through their apparent endeavour to reconcile faith with reason and religion with philosophy, to attract the young and intelligent who were not content to be driven in a common groove. He agreed with the orthodox view that revelation and prophethood were the only sources to be depended upon in so far as the faith was concerned—a view diametrically opposed to the Mu'tazilites and the philosophers—but it was not only lawful but absolutely necessary or even obligatory to take recourse to the logical deduction and prevalent philosophical terminology for evincing the religious tenets. He maintained that it was not at all necessary to avoid the issues pertaining to perception or intellect, which were ultimately grounded in human experience but had unnecessarily been made a part of religious doctrines by the rationalists, in order to prove or disprove the latter with the help of a clever play upon words. At the same time, he considered it essential for the expounders of religion to face those issues and refute the claims of the Mu'tazilites and other philosophers with the help of logic and reason. He did not subscribe to the view that the Prophet of Islam made no mention of the issues raised by the rationalists of later times, either on account of his ignorance or because the Prophet did not consider it lawful to do so. It was so simply owing to

the fact that these questions and the rationalistic modes of thought had not come into existence during the life time of the Prophet. Al-Ash'ari maintained that like the new problems of sacred and secular laws which were brought to the fore by exigencies of changing times, new questions in the realm of faith and metaphysics were also being raised. Therefore, like the jurists who had grappled with the legal problems and solved them through analogical deduction and amplification of canon-laws, the doctors of religion and the scholastics were duty-bound to explain and elucidate the canons of faith in regard to these new questions. Al-Ash'ari wrote a treatise entitled *Istehsān-ul-Khauḍh fil-kalām* to explain his view-point in this regard.

Thus, ignoring the approbation or opposition of the either sect, al-Ash'ari went ahead with the task of defending religion according to his own light. This undoubtedly required great courage and intelligence, and, as it were, al-Ash'ari proved himself equal to the task. With his lectures and writings he was able to stem the rising tide of the rationalism, *'uḍḍ* and philosophy, and save many souls from being swept away by the wave of scepticism. He inculcated faith and enthusiasm, zeal and self-confidence among the followers of orthodox school through his well-argued and forceful vindication of the faith. Al-Ash'ari's defence was, however, not the least apologetic. On the contrary, he was able to eradicate the inferiority complex that had unconsciously seized the followers of the orthodox creed, and was insidiously undermining their self-confidence. Al-Ash'ari soon turned the tables on the Mu'tazilites who, far from maintaining the force of their onslaught on the orthodox school, found it difficult to withstand the offensive of al-Ash'ari which was made with the full weight of an unshakable conviction. Abū Bakr ibn as-Sairfi says that the Mu'tazilites had caused a crisis for Islam but God brought forth Abul Hasan 'Alī al-Ash'ari to take up the cudgels against them. He was able to overcome them with his intelligence and dialectics. He, therefore, soon came to be regarded as one of the foremost expounders and renovators of the faith, while certain persons like Abū Bakr Isma'īlī hold him as

second only to Ahmad ibn Hanbal for his endeavours to uphold and defend the true Faith<sup>1</sup>

### Al-Ash'ari's Works :

Al-Ash'ari defended the orthodox school not merely with his sermons, debates and polemics, but also wrote valuable treatises to expose the weaknesses of heretical sects. Al-Zahabi reports that the commentary on the Qur'an written by al-Ash'ari ran into thirty volumes. Al-Ash'ari is said to have written some 250 to 300 works; a large number of which traverses the main positions of the Mu'tazilites or other non-conformist sects and heretical creeds<sup>2</sup>. One of the voluminous books written by al-Ash'ari is *Kitab-ul-Fusul*, comprising twelve volumes, which confutes the doctrines of a number of sects including so-called rationalists, atheists and naturalists as well as other creeds like those of the Hindus, Jews, Christians and Magians<sup>3</sup>. Ibn Khallikan has also mentioned some of his other works entitled *Kitab al-Lom'a*, *Kitab al-Muyaz*, *Idhahul-Burhan*, *Al-Tab'een 'An Usul id-Din*, and *Kitab us-Sharah wat-Tafsir*. Besides these works on dialectics, al-Ash'ari wrote several books like *Kitab ul-Qiyas*, *Kitab ul-Ijtihad* and *Khabar-ul-H'ahid* on other religious sciences. He wrote a tract to refute the doctrine of the negation of Traditions reported through more than one source, which was expounded by Ibn ul-Rawandi. In one of his books entitled *al-'Amad* al-Ash'ari has given a list of 68 books written by him till 320 A.H. i.e. four years before his death. A number of these works run into ten or twelve volumes. The books written by him during his last four years are also by no means inconsiderable. His *Maqalat-ul-Islamiyyin* shows that al-Ash'ari was not merely a dialectician but also a reliable chronicler of different faiths. In this book he has recorded the doctrines of a number of sects with a sense of responsibility

1 *Tab'een*, p 53

2 *Ibid* p 136

3 *Ibid* p 128



behoving an eminent historian, for, his explanation of their dogmas agrees with the exposition of these faiths by their own followers.<sup>1</sup>

### Profound Knowledge and Piety :

Al-Ash<sup>c</sup>ari was not simply a prolific writer but one profound in knowledge also. Like all other mentors of the old he was unrivalled in moral and spiritual excellence too. A jurist, Ahmad ibn 'Alī, says that he had been with al-Ash<sup>c</sup>ari for twenty years but he did not see anyone more reverent and godly, shy and modest in his worldly affairs but, at the same time, zestful where the performance of religious duties was concerned.<sup>2</sup> Abul Husain al-Harwī, a dialectician, relates that for years together al-Ash<sup>c</sup>ari spent whole nights in vigils and performed morning prayers with the ablution taken at the nightfall.<sup>3</sup> The personal servant of al-Ash<sup>c</sup>ari, Bindār ibn al-Husain, is on record that the only source of livelihood of al-Ash<sup>c</sup>ari consisted of a fief with an income of seventeen *dirhams* per day, which he had inherited from his grandfather Bilāl ibn Abi Burdah ibn Abi Mūsā al-Ash<sup>c</sup>ari.<sup>4</sup>

Al-Ash<sup>c</sup>ari died in 324 A. H and was buried in Baghdad.<sup>5</sup> An announcement was made over his funeral that the "Defender of the Traditions" had passed away.

### Abū Mansūr al-Maturīdī :

During the same period another theologian, Abū Mansūr al-Maturīdī (d. 332 A. H) emerged in Samarkand to defend the

1 Wensink in his book "Muslim Creed" (p 88) and Orehner in his introduction to *Maqālāt ul-Islamiyyīn*, have acknowledged this fact. (*Al-Ash<sup>c</sup>ari*, p 64)

2 *Tab<sup>c</sup>een*, p 141.

3 *Ibid*, p 141

4 *Ibid*, p 142 and Ibn Khallikān, Vol II, p 447

5 Ibn Khallikān, Vol II, p 447

faith against the attacks of the heretical sects<sup>1</sup> Owing to the continuous wrangling with the Muʿtazilites, al-Ashʿari had become a bit extremist in some of his views which were stretched further by his followers. Al-Maturīdī's thought is, however, marked by its moderation. He rejected all such accretions to the Ashʿarite thought which had become a part of it in due course of time, and which left many loopholes unfilled, many questions unanswered. Al-Maturīdī perfected the Ashʿarite system and gave it an intellectually irreproachable form. The differences between the Ashʿarites and the Maturīdites were simply marginal and limited to 30 to 40 issues of comparatively lesser importance.<sup>2</sup>

Imām Abū Mansūr al-Maturīdī, belonging to the Hanafite school of jurisprudence, had a majority of his followers amongst the theologians and dialecticians of that school just as most of the Shafʿite dialecticians followed al-Ashʿari. Al-Maturīdī was also a man of letters who has left many valuable works refuting the doctrines of the Muʿtazilites, Shiaʿites and Qarmatians. One of his books, *Tawilāt-i-Qurʾān* is an outstanding example of his keen intellect and mastery over rationalistic sciences of the day. However, since al-Ashʿari had to confront the Muʿtazilites in the centre of Islamic world, which also happened to be a seat of the Muʿtazilite school, he came to exert a far greater influence over the intellectual circles. Also, al-Ashʿari was a great original mind who would always be remembered for laying the foundation of Islamic scholasticism.

### Later Ashʿarites :

A number of reputed savants of profound knowledge and

- 1 This was the period when as a reaction to the Muʿtazilites attack on orthodox creed, several savants were giving attention to evolution of an Islamic scholasticism for the defence of Islam. Tahāwī (d 331 A H) in Egypt and al-Maturīdī (d 332 A H) in Samarkand took up the defence of religion but in due course of time both these schools of thought were absorbed in the Ashʿarite school.
- 2 Sheikh Muhammad ʿAbdahū who has gone into the matter in greater detail says that the disputed issues were not more than thirty (*Ilāh Tay-rīyah* by Mohammad Abū Zuhra p 184).

unequaled agility of mind were produced by the Ash'arite school. They contributed to the development of the school and exerted an immense influence on the minds of the intellectuals and the educated youth with the result that the orthodox school was enabled again to gain supremacy in the Islamic world. In the fourth century of the Muslim era were born such luminaries as **Caḍī Abū Bakr Baqillānī** (d 403 A.H.) and **Abū Is'haq Isfrahānī** (d 418 A.H.) and after them came **Abū Is'haq Shirāzī** (d 476 A.H.) and **Imām ul-Harmayn Abul Ma'ālī 'Abd al-Malik al-Juwaimī** (d. 478 A.H.) in the fifth century who were held in high esteem owing to their profound knowledge. **Abū Is'haq Shirāzī** was the Rector of the **Nizāmiyah University** at Baghdad. He was sent by Caliph **Muqtadi-b'illāh** as his ambassador to the Court of the Saljukid king **Malik Shah**. He was held in such a high esteem by the populace that in whichever town he happened to pass during his journey from Baghdad to Nishapur, the entire population came out to greet him, people showered over him whatever valuables they could afford and took the dust underneath his feet out of reverence. When **Shirāzī** arrived at Nishapur, the entire population came out of the city to greet him and **Imām ul-Harmayn** carried the saddle-cloth of **Shirāzī** on his shoulder as a porter's burden while escorting him. **Imām ul-Harmayn** took a pride ever thereafter on the honour of being able to serve **Shirāzī** <sup>1</sup>

**Imām ul-Harmayn** was accorded the highest place of respect by **Nizām ul-Mulk**, the Prime Minister of the Saljukid King **Alap Arslan**. He held the charge of Preacher of the principal mosque of Nishapur, Director of the Religious trusts and Rector of the **Nizāmiyah University** at Nishapur. **Ibn Khallikān** writes of him :

“For thirty years he remained without a peer in the fields of learning and piety. He was the chief mentor and preacher, exemplar and a man of God”<sup>2</sup>

An annalist has related an incident which shows the respect accorded to **Imām ul-Harmayn**. Once **Malik Shah**, the Saljukid

1 *Tabqat al-Shaf'eeh*, Vol III, pp. 91-92

2 *Ibn Khallikān*, Vol II, p 342

King announced the appearance of the new moon at the end of *Ramadhan*. Imām ul-Harmayn, not satisfied with the evidence produced in this regard, got another announcement made which said .

“Abul Ma‘ālī (name of Imām ul-Harmayn) is satisfied that the month of *Ramadhan* will continue till tomorrow. All those who want to act on his decision should keep fast tomorrow also ”

When the king questioned Imām ul-Harmayn about his announcement he said .

“I am bound to obey the King in matters falling in the sphere of the State but in questions pertaining to religion, the king ought to have asked for my decision, since under the *Shari‘ah*, a religious decree carries as much authority as the edict of the king. And the matters pertaining to fast and ‘*Id* are ecclesiastical issues with which the king has nothing to do.”

The king had at last to get another declaration made saying that his earlier announcement was wrong and that the people should therefore follow the decision of Imām ul-Harmayn <sup>1</sup>

When Imām ul-Harmayn died in 478 A H , the markets of Nishapur were closed, the pulpit of the principal mosque was dismantled and four hundred of his disciples destroyed their pens and ink-pots as a mark of respect to him. The inhabitants of Nishapur received condolences and expressed their grief on the demise of Imām ul-Harmayn with one another for full one year <sup>2</sup>

Nizām ul-Mulk Tūsi, the Prime Minister of the then strongest Islamic kingdom of Saljuks was himself an Ash‘arite. He gave great impetus to the Ash‘arite school by providing it with the official backing. The two renowned educational institutions, the Nizāmiyah Universities of Nishapur and Baghdad proved to be a turning point in the Ash‘arite bid for victory over other intellectual movements in the then Islamic world.

1 *Alhlaq-i-Jalīlī*, pp 115-119

2 *Ibn Khallikān*, Vol II, p 243

# Al-Aqidah al-Tahawiyyah

|(The creed of Ahlus Sunnah Wal-Jama'ah according to Imam Abu Ja`far al-Tahawi (RA

## :Imam Abu Ja`far al-Tahawi

Imam Abu Ja`far al-Tahawi (239-321) can be said to represent the creed of both Ash`aris and Maturidis, especially the latter, as he was also following the Hanafi madhhab. We have therefore chosen to include the entire translated text of his Statement of Islamic Doctrine commonly known as the *`aqida tahawiyya*. This text, representative of the viewpoint of Ahl al-Sunna wa al-Jama`a, has long been the most widely acclaimed, and indeed indispensable, reference work on [Muslim](#) beliefs, of which the text below is a complete English translation

Imam Abu Ja`far Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Azdi, known as Imam Tahawi after his birthplace in Egypt, is among the most outstanding authorities of the Islamic world on hadith and jurisprudence (*fiqh*). He lived at a time when both the direct and indirect disciples of the Four Imams of law were teaching and practicing. This period was the greatest [age](#) of Hadith and fiqh studies, and Imam Tahawi studied with all the living authorities of the day. Al-Badr al-`Ayni said that when Ahmad died, Tahawi was 12; when Bukhari died, he was 27; when Muslim died, he was 32; when Ibn Majah died, he was 44; when Abu Dawud died, he was 46; when Tirmidhi died, he was fifty; when Nisa'i died, he was 74. Kawthari relates this and adds the consensus of scholars that Tahawi allied in himself completion in the two knowledges of hadith and fiqh, a consensus that included, among others, al-`Ayni and al-Dhahabi, with Ibn Taymiyya singling himself out in his opinion that Tahawi was not very knowledgeable in hadith. This is flatly contradicted by Ibn Kathir who says in his notice on Tahawi in *al-Bidaya wa al-nihaya*: "He is one of the trustworthy narrators of established reliability, and one of the massive memorizers of hadith." Kawthari calls Ibn Taymiyya's verdict "another one of his random speculations" and [states](#): "No-one disregards Tahawi's knowledge of the defective hadith except ".someone whose own defects have no remedy, and may Allah protect us from such

Tahawi began his studies with his maternal uncle Isma`il ibn Yahya al-Muzani, a leading disciple of Imam Shafi`i. However, Tahawi felt instinctively drawn to the corpus of Imam Abu Hanifa's works. Indeed, he had seen his uncle and teacher turning to the works of Hanafi scholars to resolve thorny issues of fiqh, drawing heavily on the writings of Abu Hanifa's two leading companions, Muhammad Ibn al-Hasan al-Shaybani and Abu Yusuf, who had codified Hanafi fiqh. This led him to devote his whole attention to studying the Hanafi works and he eventually joined the Hanafi school. He now stands out not only as a prominent follower of that Hanafi school but, in [view](#) of his vast erudition and remarkable powers of assimilation, as one of its leading scholars. His monumental scholarly works, such as *Sharh ma`ani al-athar* and *Mushkil al-athar*, are encyclopedic in scope and have long been regarded as indispensable for training students of fiqh. He was in fact a mujtahid across the board and was thoroughly familiar with the fiqh of all four schools, as stated by Ibn `Abd al-Barr and [related](#) by Kawthari, and as shown by Tahawi's own work on comparative law entitled *'Ikhtilaf al-fuqaha*

Tahawi's "Doctrine" (al-`Aqida), though small in [size](#), is a basic text for all times, listing what a Muslim must know and believe and inwardly comprehend. There is consensus among the Companions, the Successors

and all the leading Islamic authorities such as the four Imams and their authoritative followers on the doctrines enumerated in this work, which are entirely derived from the undisputed primary sources of Religion, the Holy Qur'an and the confirmed Hadith. Being a text on Islamic doctrine, this work sums up the arguments set forth in those two sources to define sound belief, and likewise, the arguments advanced in .refuting the views of sects that have deviated from the Sunna

As regards the sects mentioned in this work, familiarity with Islamic history up to the time of Imam Tahawi would be quite helpful. More or less veiled references to sects such as the Mu'tazila, the Jahmiyya, the Karramiyya, the Qadariyya, and the Jabariyya are found in the work. It also contains allusions to other views considered unorthodox and deviant from the way of Ahl al-Sunna. There is an explicit reference in the work .to the controversy on the creation of the Qu'ran in the times of al-Ma'mun and others

While the permanent relevance of the statements of belief in the `Aqida are obvious, the historical weight and point of certain of these statements can be properly appreciated only if the work is used as a text for study under the guidance of some learned person able to elucidate its arguments fully, with reference to the intellectual and historical background of the sects refuted in the work. Since the present book is intended exactly as one such aid towards understanding the details of Islamic belief with clarity, it is hoped that the quotation of the entire text of Tahawi's "Doctrine," which we consider as the doctrine of Ahl al-Sunna wa al-Jama`a, will be of benefit to the reader. And may Allah grant us a true understanding of faith and count us .among those described by the Prophet as the Saved Group

## Aqeedah Tahawiyah

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

.In the Name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate Praise be to Allah, Lord of all the worlds

هَذَا مَا رَوَاهُ الْإِمَامُ أَبُو جَعْفَرِ الطَّحَاوِيِّ فِي ذِكْرِ بَيَانِ اعْتِقَادِ أَهْلِ السُّنَّةِ وَالْجَمَاعَةِ عَلَى مَذْهَبِ فُقَهَاءِ الْمِلَّةِ أَبِي حَنِيفَةَ النُّعْمَانَ بْنِ ثَابِتِ الْكُوفِيِّ، وَأَبِي يُوسُفَ يَعْقُوبَ بْنِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ الْأَنْصَارِيِّ، وَأَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ مُحَمَّدَ بْنَ الْحَسَنِ الشَّيْبَانِيِّ - رِضْوَانُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِمْ أَجْمَعِينَ، وَمَا يَعْتَقِدُونَ مِنْ أُصُولِ الدِّينِ وَيَدِينُونَ بِهِ لِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ.

The great scholar Hujjat al-Islam Abu Ja'far al-Warraq al-Tahawi al-Misri, may Allah have mercy on him, said: This is a presentation of the beliefs of Ahl al-Sunna wa al-Jama`a, according to the school of the jurists of this religion, Abu Hanifa al-Nu`man ibn Thabit al-Kufi, Abu Yusuf Ya`qub ibn Ibrahim al-Ansari and Abu `Abdullah Muhammad ibn al-Hasan al-Shaybani, may Allah be pleased with them all, and what they believe .regarding the fundamentals of the religion and their faith in the Lord of the worlds

نَقُولُ فِي تَوْحِيدِ اللَّهِ مُعْتَقِدِينَ، بِتَوْفِيقِ

:We say about Allah's unity, believing by Allah's help that

إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى وَاحِدٌ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ،

.Allah is One, without any partners .1

وَلَا شَيْءٌ مِثْلُهُ،

.There is nothing like Him .2

وَلَا شَيْءٌ يُعْجِزُهُ،

.There is nothing that can overwhelm Him .3

وَلَا إِلَهَ غَيْرُهُ،



.There is no god other than Him .4

قَدِيمٌ بِلَا ابْتِدَاءٍ، دَائِمٌ بِلَا انْتِهَاءٍ،

.He is the Eternal without a beginning and enduring without end .5

لَا يَفْنَى وَلَا يَبِيدُ،

.He will never perish or come to an end .6

وَلَا يَكُونُ إِلَّا مَا يُرِيدُ،

.Nothing happens except what He wills .7

لَا تَبْلُغُهُ الْأَوْهَامُ، وَلَا تُدْرِكُهُ الْأَفْهَامُ،

.No imagination can conceive of Him and no understanding can comprehend Him .8

وَلَا تُشْبِهُهُ الْأَنَامُ

.He is different from any created being .9

حَيٌّ لَا يَمُوتُ، قَيُّومٌ لَا يَنَامُ،

.He is living and never dies and is eternally active and never sleeps .10

خَالِقٌ بِلَا حَاجَةٍ، رَازِقٌ لَهُمْ بِلَا مُؤْنَةٍ،

.He creates without His being in need to do so and provides for His creation without any effort .11

مُمِيتٌ بِلَا مَخَافَةٍ، بَاعِثٌ بِلَا مَشَقَّةٍ.

.He causes death with no fear and restores to life without difficulty .12

مَازَالَ بِصِفَاتِهِ قَدِيمًا قَبْلَ خَلْقِهِ. لَمْ يَزِدْ بِكَوْنِهِمْ شَيْئًا لَمْ يَكُنْ قَبْلَهُمْ مِنْ صِفَاتِهِ، وَكَمَا كَانَ بِصِفَاتِهِ أَزَلِيًّا كَذَلِكَ لَا يَزَالُ عَلَيْهَا أَبَدِيًّا.

He has always existed together with His attributes since before creation. Bringing creation into existence .13 did not add anything to His attributes that was not already there. As He was, together with His attributes, in .pre-eternity, so He will remain throughout endless time

لَيْسَ مِنْذُ خَلْقِ الْخَلْقِ اسْتِفَادَ اسْمَ الْخَالِقِ، وَلَا بِإِحْدَاثِهِ الْبَرِيَّةَ اسْتِفَادَ اسْمَ الْبَارِي

It was not only after the act of creation that He could be described as "the Creator," nor was it only by the .14 "act of origination that He could he described as "the Originator

لَهُ مَعْنَى الرَّبُوبِيَّةِ وَلَا مَرْبُوبٍ، وَمَعْنَى الْخَالِقِيَّةِ وَلَا مَخْلُوقٍ

He was always the Lord even when there was nothing to be Lord of, and always the Creator even when .15 there was no creation

وَكَمَا أَنَّهُ مُحْيِي الْمَوْتَى بَعْدَمَا أَحْيَاهُمْ، اسْتَحَقَّ هَذَا الْاسْمَ، قَبْلَ إِحْيَائِهِمْ، كَذَلِكَ اسْتَحَقَّ اسْمَ الْخَالِقِ قَبْلَ إِنْشَائِهِمْ

In the same way that He is the "Bringer to life of the dead," after He has brought them to life a first time, .16 and deserves this name before bringing them to life, so too He deserves the name of "Creator" before He .has created them

ذَلِكَ بَأَنَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ، وَكُلُّ شَيْءٍ إِلَيْهِ فَقِيرٌ، وَكُلُّ أَمْرٍ عَلَيْهِ يَسِيرٌ، لَا يَخْتَاجُ إِلَى شَيْءٍ

لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ

This is because He has the power to do everything, everything is dependent on Him, everything is easy .17 for Him, and He does not need anything. "There is nothing like Him and He is the Hearer, the Seer." (al-Shura 42:11)

خَلَقَ الْخَلْقَ بِعِلْمِهِ،

.He created creation with His knowledge .18

وَقَدَّرَ لَهُمْ أَقْدَارًا،

.He appointed destinies for those He created .19

وَضَرَبَ لَهُمْ أَجَالَ،

.He allotted to them fixed life spans .20

لَمْ يَخْفَ عَلَيْهِ شَيْءٌ مِنْ أَعْمَالِهِمْ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَخْلُقَهُمْ، وَعَلِمَ مَا هُمْ عَامِلُونَ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَخْلُقَهُمْ

Nothing about them was hidden from Him before He created them, and He knew everything that they .21 would do before He created them

وَأَمَرَهُمْ بِطَاعَتِهِ وَنَهَاَهُمْ عَنْ مَعْصِيَتِهِ،

.He ordered them to obey Him and forbade them to disobey Him .22

وَكُلُّ شَيْءٍ يَجْرِي بِقُدْرَتِهِ وَمَشِيئَتِهِ. وَمَشِيئَتُهُ تَتَفَدَّى، وَلَا مَشِيئَةَ لِلْعِبَادِ إِلَّا مَا شَاءَ لَهُمْ، فَمَا شَاءَ لَهُمْ كَانَ وَمَا لَمْ يَشَأْ لَمْ يَكُنْ.

Everything happens according to His degree and will, and His will is accomplished. The only will that .23 people have is what He wills for them. What He wills for them occurs and what He does not will, does not occur

يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَعْصِمُ وَيُعَافِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ فَضْلًا، وَيُضِلُّ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَحْذِلُّ وَيَبْتَلِي عَذَابًا

He gives guidance to whomever He wills, and protects them, and keeps them safe from harm, out of His .24 generosity; and He leads astray whomever He wills, and abases them, and afflicts them, out of His justice

وَأَكُلُهُمْ مُتَقَلِبُونَ فِي مَشِيئَتِهِ، بَيْنَ فَضْلِهِ وَعَدْلِهِ

.All of them are subject to His will either through His generosity or His justice .25

وَهُوَ مُتَعَالٍ عَنِ الْأَضْدَادِ وَالْأَنْدَادِ

.He is Exalted beyond having opposites or equals .26

لَا رَادَّ لِقَضَائِهِ، وَلَا مُعَقَّبَ لِحُكْمِهِ، وَلَا غَالِبَ لِأَمْرِهِ،

.No one can ward off His decree or delay His command or overpower His affairs .27

أَمَّا بِذَلِكَ كُلِّهِ، وَأَيُّقِنَا أَنْ كُلًّا مِنْ عِنْدِهِ.

.We believe in all of this and are certain that everything comes from Him .28

وَإِنَّ مُحَمَّدًا صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَبْدُهُ الْمُصْطَفَى، وَنَبِيِّهِ، الْمُجْتَبَى، وَرَسُولُهُ الْمُرْتَضَى

And we are certain that Muhammad (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) is His chosen Servant .29 ,and elect Prophet and His Messenger with whom He is well pleased

خَاتِمِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَإِمَامِ الْأَتْقِيَاءِ، وَسَيِّدِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ، وَحَبِيبِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

And that he is the Seal of the Prophets and the Imam of the godfearing and the most honored of all the .30  
.messengers and the Beloved of the Lord of all the worlds

وَكُلُّ دَعْوَةٍ نُبُوَّةٍ بَعْدَ نُبُوَّتِهِ فَعَيٌّ وَهَوَى؛

.31 Every claim to Prophet-hood after Him is falsehood and deceit.

وَهُوَ الْمُبْعُوثُ إِلَى غَاْمَةِ الْجِنِّ وَكَافَّةِ الْوَرَى، الْمُبْعُوثُ بِالْحَقِّ وَالْهُدَى

He is the one who has been sent to all the jinn and all mankind with truth and guidance and with light .32  
.and illumination

وَإِنَّ الْقُرْآنَ كَلَامَ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى، بَدَأَ بِلَا كَيْفِيَّةٍ قَوْلًا، وَأَنْزَلَهُ عَلَى نَبِيِّهِ وَحِيَاءً، وَصَدَّقَهُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ عَلَى ذَلِكَ حَقًّا، وَأَيَقَنُوا أَنَّهُ كَلَامُ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى بِالْحَقِيقَةِ. لَيْسَ  
بِمَخْلُوقٍ كَكَلَامِ الْبَرِيَّةِ، فَمَنْ سَمِعَهُ فَرَعَمَ أَنَّهُ كَلَامُ الْبَشَرِ فَقَدْ كَفَرَ، وَقَدْ ذَمَّهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى وَعَابَهُ، وَأَوْعَدَهُ عَذَابَهُ، حَيْثُ قَالَ:

سَأَصْلِيهِ سَقَرَ

فَلَمَّا أُوْعِدَ اللَّهُ سَقَرَ لِمَنْ قَالَ:

إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا قَوْلُ الْبَشَرِ

عَلِمْنَا أَنَّهُ قَوْلُ خَالِقِ الْبَشَرِ، وَلَا يُشْبِهُهُ قَوْلُ الْبَشَرِ،

The Qur'an is the word of Allah. It came from Him as speech without it being possible to say how. He .33  
sent it down on His Messenger as revelation. The believers accept it, as absolute truth. They are certain that  
it is, in truth, the word of Allah. It is not created as is the speech of human beings, and anyone who hears it  
and claims that it is human speech has become an unbeliever. Allah warns him and censures him and  
threatens him with Fire when He says, Exalted is He: "I will burn him in the Fire." (al-Muddaththir 74:26)  
When Allah threatens with the Fire those who say "This is just human speech" (74:25) we know for certain  
.that it is the speech of the Creator of mankind and that it is totally unlike the speech of mankind

وَمَنْ وَصَفَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى بِمَعْنَى مِنْ مَعَانِي الْبَشَرِ فَقَدْ كَفَرَ، وَعَلِمَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى بِصِفَاتِهِ لَيْسَ كَالْبَشَرِ. فَمَنْ أَبْصَرَ هَذَا اعْتَبَرَ، وَعَنْ مِثْلِ قَوْلِ الْكُفَّارِ انْزَجَرَ

Anyone who describes Allah as being in any way the same as a human being has become an unbeliever. .34  
All those who grasp this will take heed and refrain from saying things such as the unbelievers say, and they  
.will know that He, in His attributes, is not like human beings

وَالرُّؤْيَةُ حَقٌّ لِأَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ بَعْدَ إِحَاطَةِ وَلَا كَيْفِيَّةٍ، كَمَا نَطَقَ بِهِ كِتَابُ رَبَّنَا حَيْثُ قَالَ:

وَجُودٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ نَاضِرَةٌ إِلَى رَبِّهَا نَاطِرَةٌ -

وَتَفْسِيرُهُ عَلَى مَا أَرَادَهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى وَعَلِمَهُ، وَكُلُّ مَا جَاءَ فِي ذَلِكَ مِنَ الْحَدِيثِ الصَّحِيحِ عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَنْ أَصْحَابِهِ رِضْوَانُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِمْ  
وَمَعْنَاهُ وَتَفْسِيرُهُ عَلَى مَا أَرَادَ، لَا نَدْخُلُ فِي ذَلِكَ مُتَأَوِّلِينَ بِأَرَانِنَا وَلَا مُتَوَهِّمِينَ بِأَهْوَانِنَا، فَإِنَّهُ مَا سَلِمَ فِي دِينِهِ إِلَّا مَنْ سَلَّمَ لِلَّهِ تَعَالَى، أَجْمَعِينَ فَهُوَ كَمَا قَالَ  
وَلِرَسُولِهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ؛ وَرَدَّ عِلْمَ مَا اسْتَبْتَبَهُ عَلَيْهِ إِلَى عَالِمِهِ

The Seeing of Allah by the People of the Garden is true, without their vision being all-encompassing and .35  
without the manner of their vision being known. As the Book of our Lord has expressed it: "Faces on that  
Day radiant, looking at their Lord." (al-Qiyama 75:22-3) The explanation of this is as Allah knows and wills.  
Everything that has come down to us about this from the Messenger, may Allah bless him and grant him  
peace, in authentic traditions, is as he said and means what he intended. We do not delve into that, trying to  
.interpret it according to our own opinions or letting our imaginations have free rein

No one is safe in his religion unless he surrenders himself completely to Allah, the Exalted and Glorified and  
to His Messenger, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and leaves the knowledge of things that are

.ambiguous to the one who knows them

وَلَا يَثْبُتُ قَدَمُ الْإِسْلَامِ إِلَّا عَلَى ظَهْرِ التَّسْلِيمِ وَالْإِسْتِسْلَامِ، فَمَنْ رَامَ عِلْمَ مَا حُظِرَ عَلَيْهِ، وَلَمْ يَقْتَعِ بِالتَّسْلِيمِ فَهْمَهُ، حَجَبَهُ مَرَامُهُ عَنِ خَالصِ التَّوْحِيدِ، وَصَافِي التَّكْذِيبِ، وَالْإِفْرَارِ وَالْإِنْكَارِ، مُوسَّسًا تَانَهَا، زَانِعًا شَاكَاً، لَا مُؤْمِنًا مُصَدِّقًا، وَلَا جَاحِدًا مُكْذِبًا. ، وَصَحِيحِ الْإِيمَانِ، فَيَتَذَدُّبُ بَيْنَ الْكُفْرِ وَالْإِيمَانِ، الْمَعْرِفَةَ

A man's Islam is not secure unless it is based on submission and surrender. Anyone who desires to know .36 things which it is beyond his capacity to know, and whose intellect is not content with surrender, will find that his desire veils him from a pure understanding of Allah's true unity, clear knowledge and correct belief, and that he veers between disbelief and belief, confirmation and denial and acceptance and rejection. He will be subject to whisperings and find himself confused and full of doubt, being neither an accepting believer nor a .denying rejector

وَلَا يَصِحُّ الْإِيمَانُ بِالرُّؤْيَا لِأَهْلِ دَارِ السَّلَامِ لِمَنْ اِعْتَبَرَهَا مِنْهُمْ بِوَجْهِهِ، أَوْ تَأَوَّلَهَا بِفَهْمِهِ، إِذَا كَانَ تَأْوِيلُ الرُّؤْيَا وَتَأْوِيلُ كُلِّ مَعْنَى يُضَافُ إِلَى الرُّبُوبِيَّةِ تَرْكِ التَّأْوِيلِ وَالزُّوْمِ التَّسْلِيمِ، وَعَلَيْهِ دِينُ الْمُرْسَلِينَ وَشَرَائِعِ النَّبِيِّينَ. وَمَنْ لَمْ يَتَوَقَّ النَّفْيَ وَالتَّشْبِيهَ، وَلَمْ يُصِبِ التَّنْزِيهَ؛ فَإِنَّ رَبَّنَا جَلَّ وَعَلَا مُوصُوفٌ بِصِفَاتِ الْوَحْدَانِيَّةِ، مَنَعُوتٌ بِنَعُوتِ الْفِرْدَانِيَّةِ، لَيْسَ، بِمَعْنَاهُ أَحَدٌ مِنَ الْبَرِيَّةِ

Belief of a man in the seeing of Allah by the People of the Garden is not correct if he imagines what it is .37 like or interprets it according to his own understanding, since the interpretation of this seeing or indeed, the meaning of any of the subtle phenomena which are in the realm of Lordship, is by avoiding its interpretation .and strictly adhering to the submission

This is the religion of Muslims. Anyone who does not guard himself against negating the attributes of Allah, or likening Allah to something else, has gone astray and has failed to understand Allah's glory, because our Lord, the Glorified and the Exalted, can only possibly be described in terms of oneness and absolute .singularity and no creation is in any way like Him

تَعَالَى اللَّهُ عَنِ الْخُدُودِ وَالغَايَاتِ، وَالْأَرْكَانِ وَالْأَدْوَاتِ، لِاتِّخْوَاهِ الْجِهَاتِ السَّتِّ كَسَائِرِ الْمُبْتَدِعَاتِ.

He is beyond having limits placed on Him, or being restricted, or having parts or limbs. Nor is He .38 contained by the six directions as all created things are

وَالْمِعْرَاجُ حَقٌّ. وَقَدْ أُسْرِيَ بِالنَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَعُرِجَ بِشَخْصِهِ فِي الْيَقِظَةِ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ، ثُمَّ إِلَى حَيْثُ شَاءَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى مِنَ الْعُلَى، وَأَكْرَمَهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى، بِمَا شَاءَ

فَأَوْحَى إِلَى عِبْدِهِ مَا أَوْحَى (مَا كَذَبَ الْفُؤَادُ مَا رَأَى) فَصَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ وَالْأُولَى

Al-Mi`raj (the Ascent through the heavens) is true. The Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him .39 peace, was taken by night and ascended in his bodily form, while awake, through the heavens, to whatever heights Allah willed for him. Allah ennobled him in the way that He ennobled him and revealed to him what He revealed to him, "and his heart was not mistaken about what it saw" (al-Najm 53:11). Allah blessed him .and granted him peace in this world and the next

وَالْحَوْضُ الَّذِي أَكْرَمَهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى بِهِ غِيَاثًا لَأُمَّتِهِ حَقٌّ

Al-Hawd, the Pool which Allah has granted the Prophet as an honour to quench the thirst of his .40 Community on the Day of Judgement, is true

وَالشَّفَاعَةُ الَّتِي ادَّخَرَهَا اللَّهُ لَهُمْ كَمَا رُوِيَ فِي الْأَخْبَارِ

.Al-Shafa`a, the intercession which is stored up for Muslims, is true, as related in the hadiths .41

وَالْمِيثَاقُ الَّذِي أَخَذَهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى مِنْ آدَمَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ وَوَدَّعِيَّتِهِ حَقٌّ.

.The covenant which Allah made with Adam and his offspring is true .42

وَقَدْ عَلِمَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى فِيمَا لَمْ يَزَلْ عَدَدٌ مَنْ يَدْخُلُ الْجَنَّةَ، وَيَدْخُلُ النَّارَ جُمْلَةً وَاحِدَةً، لَا يَزَادُ فِي ذَلِكَ الْعَدَدِ وَلَا يَنْقُصُ مِنْهُ؛

43. Allah knew, before the existence of time, the exact number of those who would enter the Garden and the exact number of those who would enter the Fire. This number will neither be increased nor decreased

وَكَذَلِكَ أَعْمَالُهُمْ، فِيمَا عَلِمَ مِنْهُمْ أَنَّهُمْ يَفْعَلُونَهُ وَكُلُّ مَيْسَرٍ لِمَا خُلِقَ لَهُ. وَالْأَعْمَالُ بِالْخَوَاتِيمِ. وَالسَّعِيدُ مِنَ سَعْدِ بِقَضَاءِ اللَّهِ، الشَّقِيُّ مِنَ شَقَى بِقَضَاءِ اللَّهِ. .

44. The same applies to all actions done by people, which are done exactly as Allah knew they would be done. Everyone is eased towards what he was created for and it is the action with which a man's life is sealed which dictates his fate. Those who are fortunate are fortunate by the decree of Allah, and those who are wretched are wretched by the decree of Allah

وَأَصْلُ الْقَدْرِ سِرُّ اللَّهِ فِي خَلْقِهِ، لَمْ يَطَّلِعْ عَلَى ذَلِكَ مَلَكٌ مُعَرَّبٌ، وَلَا نَبِيٌّ مُرْسَلٌ. وَالْتَعَمُّقُ وَالنَّظَرُ فِي ذَلِكَ ذَرِيْعَةُ الْخِذْلَانِ، وَسَلْمُ الْحُرْمَانِ، وَدَرَجَةُ الطُّغْيَانِ. فَالْحَدْرُ كُلُّ الْحَدْرِ مِنْ ذَلِكَ نَظَرًا أَوْ فِكْرًا أَوْ وَسْوَسَةً، فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى طَوَّى عِلْمَ الْقَدْرِ عَنْ أَنْامِهِ، وَنَهَاهُمْ عَنْ مَرَامِهِ، كَمَا قَالَ فِي كِتَابِهِ:

لَا يُسْأَلُ عَمَّا يَفْعَلُ وَهُمْ يُسْأَلُونَ

فَمَنْ سَأَلَ: لِمَ فَعَلَ؟ فَقَدْ رَدَّ حُكْمَ كِتَابِ اللَّهِ، وَمَنْ رَدَّ حُكْمَ كِتَابِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى كَانَ مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ. .

45. The exact nature of the decree is Allah's secret in His creation, and no angel near the Throne, nor Prophet sent with a message, has been given knowledge of it. Delving into it and reflecting too much about it only leads to destruction and loss, and results in rebelliousness. So be extremely careful about thinking and reflecting on this matter or letting doubts about it assail you, because Allah has kept knowledge of the decree away from human beings, and forbidden them to enquire about it, saying in His Book, "He is not (asked about what He does, but they are asked)" (al-Anbiya' 21: 23

Therefore, anyone who asks: "Why did Allah do that?" has gone against a judgement of the Book, and anyone who goes against a judgement of the Book is an unbeliever

فَهَذَا جُمْلَةٌ مَا يَخْتَاجُ إِلَيْهِ مَنْ هُوَ مُتَوَرِّقٌ قَلْبُهُ مِنْ أَوْلِيَاءِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى، وَهِيَ دَرَجَةُ الرَّاسِخِينَ فِي الْعِلْمِ؛ لِأَنَّ الْعِلْمَ عِلْمَانِ: عِلْمٌ فِي الْخَلْقِ مُوجُودٌ، وَعِلْمٌ فِي الْخَلْقِ مَفْقُودٌ؛ فَإِنْكَارُ الْعِلْمِ الْمَوْجُودِ كُفْرٌ، وَادِّعَاءُ الْعِلْمِ الْمَفْقُودِ كُفْرٌ. وَلَا يَصِحُّ الْإِيمَانُ إِلَّا بِقَبُولِ الْعِلْمِ الْمَوْجُودِ، وَتَرْكِ طَلَبِ الْعِلْمِ الْمَفْقُودِ.

46. This in sum is what those of Allah's Friends with enlightened hearts need to know and constitutes the degree of those firmly endowed with knowledge. For there are two kinds of knowledge: knowledge which is accessible to created beings, and knowledge which is not accessible to created beings. Denying the knowledge which is accessible is disbelief, and claiming the knowledge which is inaccessible is disbelief. Belief can only be firm when accessible knowledge is accepted and the inaccessible is not sought after

وَتُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّوْحِ، وَالْقَلَمِ، بِجَمِيعِ مَا فِيهِ قَدْرَقِمَ. فَلَوْ اجْتَمَعَ الْخَلْقُ كُلُّهُمْ عَلَى شَيْءٍ كَتَبَهُ اللَّهُ فِيهِ أَنَّهُ كَانِنٌ لِيَجْعَلُوهُ غَيْرَ كَانِنٍ لَمْ يَقْدِرُوا عَلَيْهِ. جَفَّ الْقَلَمُ بِمَا هُوَ كَانِنٌ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ. وَمَا أَحْطَأَ الْعَبْدُ لَمْ يَكُنْ لِيُصِيبَهُ، وَمَا أَصَابَهُ لَمْ يَكُنْ لِيُحْطِنَهُ.

47. We believe in al-Lawh (the Tablet) and al-Qalam (the Pen) and in everything written on the former. Even if all created beings were to gather together to make something fail to exist, whose existence Allah had written on the Tablet, they would not be able to do so. And if all created beings were to gather together to make something exist which Allah had not written on it, they would not be able to do so. The Pen has dried having written down all that will be in existence until the Day of Judgement. Whatever a person has missed he would have never got, and whatever he gets he would have never missed

وَعَلَى الْعَبْدِ أَنْ يَعْلَمَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ سَبَقَ عِلْمُهُ فِي كُلِّ شَيْءٍ كَانِنٍ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ، وَقَدَّرَ ذَلِكَ بِمَشِيئَتِهِ تَقْدِيرًا مُحْكَمًا مُبْرَمًا، لَيْسَ فِيهِ نَاقِضٌ وَلَا مُعَقِّبٌ، وَلَا مُزِيلٌ وَلَا مُعَيِّرٌ، وَلَا مُحَوِّلٌ، وَلَا زَائِدٌ وَلَا نَاقِصٌ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ فِي سَمَاوَاتِهِ وَأَرْضِهِ وَذَلِكَ مِنْ عَقْدِ الْإِيمَانِ وَأَصُولِ الْمَعْرِفَةِ، وَالْاعْتِرَافِ بِتَوْحِيدِ اللَّهِ وَرُبُوبِيَّتِهِ؛ كَمَا قَالَ تَعَالَى فِي كِتَابِهِ الْعَزِيزِ:

وَخَلَقَ كَمَلِّ شَيْءٍ فَقَدَرَهُ تَقْدِيرًا

وَقَالَ تَعَالَى:

وَكَانَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ قَدْرًا مَقْدُورًا

فَوَيْلٌ لِمَنْ صَارَ لَهُ اللَّهُ فِي الْقَدْرِ حَصِيمًا، وَأَحْضَرَ لِلنَّظَرِ فِيهِ قَلْبًا سَقِيمًا، لَقَدْ التَّمَسَ بِوَهْمِهِ فِي مَحْضِ الْعَيْبِ سِرًّا كَتِيمًا، وَعَادَ بِمَا قَالَ فِيهِ أَفَّاكًا أَتِيمًا .

It is necessary for the servant to know that Allah already knows everything that is going to happen in His .48 creation and has decreed it in a detailed and decisive way. There is nothing that He has created in either the heavens or the earth that can contradict it, or add to it, or erase it, or change it, or decrease it, or increase it in any way. This is a fundamental aspect of belief and a necessary element of all knowledge and recognition of Allah's oneness and Lordship. As Allah says in His Book: "He created everything and decreed it in a detailed way." (al-Furqan 25: 2) And He also says: "Allah's command is always a decided decree." (al-Ahzab 33: 38) So woe to anyone who argues with Allah concerning the decree and who, with a sick heart, starts delving into this matter. In his deluded attempt to investigate the Unseen, he is seeking a secret that can .never be uncovered, and he ends up an evil-doer, telling nothing but lies

وَالْعَرْشُ وَالْكُرْسِيُّ حَقٌّ

.49 Al-`Arsh (the Throne) and al-Kursi (the Chair) are true

وَهُوَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ مُسْتَعِنٌّ عَنِ الْعَرْشِ وَمَا دُونَهُ،

.50 He is independent of the Throne and that which is beneath it

مُحِيطٌ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَبِمَا فَوْقَهُ، قَدْ أَعْجَزَ عَنِ الْإِحَاطَةِ خَلْقَهُ.

He encompasses all things and that which is above it, and what He has created is incapable of .51 encompassing Him

وَنَقُولُ: إِنَّ اللَّهَ اتَّخَذَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ خَلِيلًا، وَكَلَّمَ مُوسَى تَكْلِيمًا، إِيْمَانًا وَتَصَدِّقًا وَتَسْلِيمًا.

We say with belief, acceptance and submission that Allah took Ibrahim as an intimate friend and that He .52 spoke directly to Musa

وَنُؤْمِنُ بِالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ، وَالْكِتَابِ الْمُنزَّلَةِ عَلَى الْمُرْسَلِينَ. وَنَشْهَدُ أَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا عَلَى الْحَقِّ الْمُبِينِ.

We believe in the angels, and the Prophets, and the books which were revealed to the messengers, and .53 we bear witness that they were all following the manifest Truth

وَنُسَمِّي أَهْلَ قِبَلَتِنَا مُسْلِمِينَ مُؤْمِنِينَ مَا دَامُوا بِمَا جَاءَ بِهِ النَّبِيُّ عَلَيْهِ الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ مُعْتَرِفِينَ، وَلَهُ بِكُلِّ مَا قَالَ وَأَخْبَرَ مُصَدِّقِينَ غَيْرَ مُكَدِّبِينَ.

We call the people of our qibla Muslims and believers as long as they acknowledge what the Prophet, .54 may Allah bless him and grant him peace, brought, and accept as true everything that he said and told us about

وَلَا نَحُوضُ فِي اللَّهِ، وَلَا نُمَارِي فِي دِينِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى.

.55 We do not enter into vain talk about Allah nor do we allow any dispute about the religion of Allah

وَلَا نُجَادِلُ فِي الْقُرْآنِ؛ وَنَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُ كَلَامُ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ، نَزَلَ بِهِ الرُّوحُ الْأَمِينُ، فَعَلَّمَهُ سَيِّدَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ، مُحَمَّدًا صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ. وَكَلَامُ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى لَا يُسَاوِيهِ شَيْءٌ مِنْ كَلَامِ الْمَخْلُوقِينَ. وَلَا نَقُولُ بِخَلْقِ الْقُرْآنِ؛ وَلَا نُخَالِفُ جَمَاعَةَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ.

We do not argue about the Qur'an and we bear witness that it is the speech of the Lord of all the Worlds .56 which the Trustworthy Spirit came down with and taught the most honoured of all the Messengers, Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. It is the speech of Allah and no speech of any created being is comparable to it. We do not say that it was created and we do not go against the .Congregation (jama`a) of the Muslims regarding it



ولا تكفراً أحداً من أهل القبلة بذنب ، ما لم يستحله

We do not consider any of the people of our qibla to be unbelievers because of any wrong action they .57  
.have done, as long as they do not consider that action to have been lawful

ولا نقول: لا يضر مع الإسلام ذنب لمن عمله؛

.Nor do we say that the wrong action of a man who has belief does not have a harmful effect on him .58

وَنَرْجُو لِلْمُحْسِنِينَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ، وَلَا نَأْمَنُ عَلَيْهِمْ، وَلَا نَشْهَدُ لَهُمْ بِالْجَنَّةِ، وَنَسْتَغْفِرُ لِمُسِيئِهِمْ. وَنَخَافُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا نَقْتَطُهُمْ.

We hope that Allah will pardon the people of right action among the believers and grant them entrance .59  
into the Garden through His mercy, but we cannot be certain of this, and we cannot bear witness that it will  
definitely happen and that they will be in the Garden. We ask forgiveness for the people of wrong action  
.among the believers and, although we are afraid for them, we are not in despair about them

وَالْأَمْنُ وَالْإِيَّاسُ يَنْقُلَانِ عَنِ الْمَلَّةِ؛ وَسَبِيلُ الْحَقِّ بَيْنَهُمَا، لِأَهْلِ الْقِبْلَةِ

Certainty and despair both remove one from the religion, but the path of truth for the People of the Qibla .60  
.lies between the two

وَلَا يَخْرُجُ الْعَبْدُ مِنَ الْإِيمَانِ إِلَّا بِجُحُودٍ مَا أَدْخَلَهُ فِيهِ.

.A person does not step out or belief except by disavowing what brought him into it .61

وَالْإِيمَانُ هُوَ الْإِفْرَارُ بِاللِّسَانِ وَالتَّصَدِيقُ بِالْجَنَانِ،

.Belief consists of affirmation by the tongue and acceptance by the heart .62

وَأَنَّ جَمِيعَ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فِي الْقُرْآنِ، وَجَمِيعَ مَا صَحَّ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مِنَ الشَّرْعِ وَالْبَيَانِ كُلُّهُ حَقٌّ.

And the whole of what is proven from the Prophet, upon him be peace, regarding the Shari`a and the .63  
.explanation (of the Qur'an and of Islam) is true

وَالْإِيمَانُ وَاحِدٌ وَاهْلُهُ فِي أَصْلِهِ سَوَاءٌ. وَالتَّفَاضُلُ بَيْنَهُمْ بِالتَّقْوَى وَمُخَالَفَةِ الْهَوَى وَ مِلَازِمَةِ الْأُولَى

Belief is, at base, the same for everyone, but the superiority of some over others in it is due to their fear .64  
.and awareness of Allah, their opposition to their desires, and their choosing what is more pleasing to Allah

وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ كُلُّهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ الرَّحْمَنِ، وَأَكْرَمُهُمْ أَطْوَعُهُمْ وَأَتَّبَعُهُمْ لِلْقُرْآنِ

All the believers are Friends of Allah and the noblest of them in the sight of Allah are those who are the .65  
.most obedient and who most closely follow the Qur'an

وَالْإِيمَانُ: هُوَ الْإِيمَانُ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ، وَالتَّبَعُ بَعْدَ الْمَوْتِ، وَالْقَدْرُ خَيْرُهُ وَشَرُّهُ؛ وَخُلُوهُ وَمُرُّهُ مِنَ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى.

Belief consists of belief in Allah, His angels, His books, His messengers, the Last Day, and belief that the .66  
.Decree -- both the good of it and the evil of it, the sweet of it and the bitter of it -- is all from Allah

وَنَحْنُ مُؤْمِنُونَ بِذَلِكَ كُلِّهِ، وَلَا نَفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْ رُسُلِهِ، وَنُصَدِّقُهُمْ كُلَّهُمْ عَلَى مَا جَاءُوا بِهِ.

We believe in all these things. We do not make any distinction between any of the messengers, we .67  
.accept as true what all of them brought

وَأَهْلُ الْكِبَائِرِ مِنْ أُمَّةٍ مُحَمَّدٌ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِي النَّارِ لَا يَخْلُدُونَ إِذَا مَاتُوا، وَهُمْ مُؤَحَّدُونَ وَإِنْ لَمْ يَكُونُوا تَابِعِينَ بَعْدَ أَنْ لَقُوا اللَّهَ عَارِفِينَ مُؤْمِنِينَ، وَهُمْ  
فِي مَشِيئَتِهِ وَحُكْمِهِ إِنْ شَاءَ عَفَرَ لَهُمْ، وَعَفَا عَنْهُمْ بِفَضْلِهِ، كَمَا قَالَ تَعَالَى فِي كِتَابِهِ الْعَزِيزِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ :

وَأِنْ شَاءَ عَذِبُهُمْ فِي النَّارِ بِقَدْرِ جُنَايَتِهِمْ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ، ثُمَّ يَبْعَثُهُمْ إِلَى جَنَّتِهِ، وَذَلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ مَوْلَى أَهْلِ الْإِسْلَامِ، يُخْرِجُهُمْ مِنْهَا بِرَحْمَتِهِ وَشَفَاعَةِ الشَّافِعِينَ مِنْ أَهْلِ طَاعَتِهِ مَعْرِفَتِهِ، وَلَمْ يَجْعَلْهُمْ فِي الدَّارَيْنِ كَأَهْلِ نُكْرَتِهِ الَّذِينَ خَابُوا مِنْ هِدَايَتِهِ، وَلَمْ يَنَالُوا مِنْ وِلَايَتِهِ. اللَّهُمَّ يَا وَلِيَّ الْإِسْلَامِ وَأَهْلِهِ مَسْكُنًا بِالْإِسْلَامِ حَتَّى نَلْقَاكَ بِهِ.

Those of the Community of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, who have committed 68 grave sins will be in the Fire, but not forever, provided they die and meet Allah as believers affirming His unity even if they have not repented. They are subject to His will and judgement

If He wants, He will forgive them and pardon them out of His generosity, as is mentioned in the Qur'an when He says: "And He forgives anything less than that (shirk) to whomever He wills" (al-Nisa' 4: 116); if He wants, He will punish them in the Fire out of His justice, and then bring them out of the Fire through His mercy, and for the intercession of those who were obedient to Him, and send them to the Garden

This is because Allah is the Protector of those who recognize Him and will not treat them in the hereafter in the same way as He treats those who deny Him, who are bereft of His guidance and have failed to obtain His protection. O Allah, You are the Protector of Islam and its people; make us firm in Islam until the day we meet You

ونرى الصلاة خلف كل بر وفاجر من اهل القبلة ، ونصلى من مات منهم

We agree with doing the prayer behind any of the People of the Qibla whether rightful or wrongful, and 69 .doing the funeral prayer over any of them when they die

ولا ننزل احداً منهم جنة ولا ناراً ، ولا نشهد عليهم بكفر ولا شرك ولا نفاق ما لم يظهر منهم من ذلك شيء ، و نذر سراعهم الى الله تعالى

We do not say that any of them will categorically go to either the Garden or the Fire, and we do not 70 accuse any of them of kufr (disbelief), shirk (associating partners with Allah), or nifaq (hypocrisy), as long as they have not openly demonstrated any of those things. We leave their secrets to Allah

ولا نرى السيف على احداً من امة محمد الا من وجب عليه السيف

We do not agree with killing any of the Community of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him 71 .peace, unless it is obligatory by Shari'a to do so

ولا نرى الخروج على امتنا و ولاية امورنا وان جاروا ولا ندعو على احداً منهم ، ولا ننزع يدا من طاعتهم من طاعة فريضة ما لم يامروا بمعصية وندعو لهم بالصلاح والمعافاة

We do not accept rebellion against our Imam or those in charge of our affairs even if they are unjust, nor 72 do we wish evil on them, nor do we withdraw from following them. We hold that obedience to them is part of obedience to Allah, the Glorified, and therefore obligatory as long as they do not order to commit sins. We pray for their right guidance and ask for pardon for their wrongs

وَنَتَّبِعُ السُّنَّةَ وَالْجَمَاعَةَ، وَنَجْتَنِبُ الشُّذُودَ وَالْخِلَافَ وَالْفُرْقَةَ

We follow the Sunna of the Prophet and the Congregation of the Muslims, and avoid deviation, 73 .differences and divisions

وَنُحِبُّ أَهْلَ الْعَدْلِ وَالْأَمَانَةِ، وَنُبْغِضُ أَهْلَ الْجَوْرِ وَالْخِيَانَةِ

.We love the people of justice and trustworthiness, and hate the people of injustice and treachery 74

ونقول اللهم اعلم فيما اشتبه علينا علمه

.When our knowledge about something is unclear, we say: "Allah knows best 75

ونرى المسح على الخفين في السفر والحضر، كما جاء في الأثر

We agree with wiping over leather socks (in ablution) whether on a journey or otherwise, just as has .76  
.come in the hadiths

وَالْحَجُّ وَالْجِهَادُ فَرَضَانِ مَاضِيَانِ مَعَ أُولَى الْأَمْرِ مِنْ أُمَّةِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ بَرَّهْمُ وَفَاجِرِهِمْ لَا يُبْطَلُهُمَا شَيْءٌ، وَلَا يُنْقَضُهُمَا.

Hajj and jihad under the leadership of those in charge of the Muslims, whether they are right or wrong- .77  
.acting, are continuing obligations until the Last Hour comes. Nothing can annul or controvert them

وَتُؤْمِنُ بِالْكَرَامِ الْكَاتِبِينَ، وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ جَعَلَهُمْ حَافِظِينَ

We believe in the the noble angels who write down our actions, for Allah has appointed them over us as .78  
.two guardians

وَتُؤْمِنُ بِمَلَكِ الْمَوْتِ الْمُوَكَّلِ بِقَبْضِ أَرْوَاحِ الْعَالَمِينَ.

.We believe in the Angel of Death who is in charge of taking the spirits of all the worlds .79

وَيُعَذِّبُ الْقَبْرَ لِمَنْ كَانَ لَهُ أَهْلًا.

وَبِسُؤَالِ مُنْكَرٍ وَنَكِيرٍ لِلْمَيِّتِ فِي قَبْرِهِ عَنْ رَبِّهِ وَدِينِهِ وَنَبِيِّهِ، عَلَى مَا جَاءَتْ بِهِ الْأَخْبَارُ عَنْ رَسُولِ رَبِّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، وَعَنِ الصَّحَابَةِ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ.

We believe in the punishment in the grave for those who deserve it, and in the questioning in the grave .80  
by Munkar and Nakir about one's Lord, one's religion and one's prophet, as has come down in the hadiths  
from the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and in reports from the Companions,  
.may Allah be pleased with them all

وَالْقَبْرُ رَوْضَةٌ مِنْ رِيَاضِ الْجَنَّةِ أَوْ حُفْرَةٌ مِنْ حُفْرِ النَّارِ.

.The grave is either one of the meadows of the Garden or one of the pits of the Fire .81

وَتُؤْمِنُ بِالْبَعْثِ وَبِجَزَاءِ الْأَعْمَالِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ، وَالْعَرْضِ وَالصَّرَاطِ، وَالْحِسَابِ، وَقِرَاءَةِ الْكِتَابِ، وَالتَّوَابِ وَالْعِقَابِ  
وَالْمِيزَانِ يُوزَنُ بِهِ أَعْمَالُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنَ الْخَيْرِ وَالشَّرِّ وَالطَّاعَةِ وَالْمَعْصِيَةِ.

We believe in being brought back to life after death and in being recompensed for our actions on the Day .82  
of Judgement, and the exhibition of works, and the reckoning, and the reading of the book, and the reward  
or punishments, and the Bridge, and the Balance; and the deeds of the Muslims, good evil obedient and  
.disobedient are weighed by it

وَالْجَنَّةُ وَالنَّارُ مَخْلُوقَتَانِ لَا يَفْنَيَانِ، وَلَا يَبِيدَانِ.

وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى خَلَقَ الْجَنَّةَ وَالنَّارَ، وَخَلَقَ لَهُمَا أَهْلًا.

فَمَنْ شَاءَ إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ أَدْخَلَهُ فَضْلًا مِنْهُ، وَمَنْ شَاءَ مِنْهُمْ إِلَى النَّارِ أَدْخَلَهُ عَذَابًا مِنْهُ.

وَصَائِرَ إِلَى مَا خُلِقَ لَهُ، وَكُلٌّ يَعْمَلُ لِمَا قَدْ فُرِعَ مِنْهُ

The Garden and the Fire are created things that never come to an end and we believe that Allah created .83  
them before the rest of creation and then created people to inhabit each of them. Whoever He wills goes to  
the Garden out of His bounty and whoever He wills goes to the Fire through His justice. Everybody acts in  
.accordance with what is destined for him and goes towards what he has been created for

وَالْخَيْرُ وَالشَّرُّ مُقَدَّرَانِ عَلَى الْعِبَادِ،

.Good and evil have both been decreed for people .84

وَالْإِسْتِطَاعَةُ الَّتِي يَجِبُ بِهَا الْفِعْلُ مِنْ نَحْوِ التَّوْفِيقِ الَّذِي لَا يَجُوزُ أَنْ يُوصَفَ الْمَخْلُوقُ بِهَا تَكُونُ مَعَ الْفِعْلِ، وَأَمَّا الْإِسْتِطَاعَةُ مِنَ الصَّحَّةِ وَالْوُسْعِ وَالتَّمَكُّنِ،  
وَسَلَامَةِ الْإِلَاتِ فَهِيَ قَبْلَ الْفِعْلِ، وَبِهَا يَتَعَلَّقُ الْخِطَابُ، وَهُوَ كَمَا قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى:

لَا يَكْفُفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا

The capability in terms of divine grace and favor which makes an action certain to occur cannot be ascribed to a created being. This capability is integral with action, whereas the capability of an action in terms of having the necessary health and ability, being in a position to act, and having the necessary means, exists in a person before the action. It is this type of capability which is the object of the dictates of the Shari'a. Allah the Exalted says: "Allah does not charge a person except according to his ability." (al-Baqara 2: 286)

وَأَفْعَالُ الْعِبَادِ هِيَ بِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى وَكَسْبِ مِنَ الْعِبَادِ.

.86 People's actions are created by Allah but earned by people.

ولم يكلفهم الله تعالى إلا ما يطيقون ، ولا يطيقون إلا ما كلفهم . وهو تفسير لا حول ولا قوة الا بالله ، نقول : لا حيلة لأحد ، [ ولا تحول لأحد ] ، ولا حركة لأحد عن معصية الله ، الا بمعونة الله ، ولا قوة لأحد على إقامة طاعة الله والثبات عليها إلا بتوفيق الله .

Allah, the Exalted, has only charged people with what they are able to do and people are only capable of doing what Allah has granted them to do. This is the explanation of the phrase: "There is no power and no strength except by Allah." We add to this that there is no stratagem or way by which anyone can avoid or escape disobedience to Allah except with Allah's help; nor does anyone have the strength to put obedience to Allah into practice and remain firm in it, except if Allah makes it possible for him to do so

وَكُلُّ شَيْءٍ يَجْرِي بِمَشِيئَةِ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ وَعِلْمِهِ وَقَضَائِهِ وَقَدَرِهِ.  
عَلَبَتْ مَشِيئَتُهُ الْمَشِينَاتِ كُلَّهَا، وَعَلَبَ قِضَاؤُهُ الْحِيَلِ كُلَّهَا، يَفْعَلُ مَا شَاءَ وَهُوَ عَيْرُ ظَالِمٍ أَبَدًا.  
تَقَدَّسَ، عَنْ كُلِّ سُوءٍ، وَتَنَزَّهَ عَنْ كُلِّ عَيْبٍ وَشَيْنٍ

(لَا يُسْأَلُ عَمَّا يَفْعَلُ وَهُمْ يُسْأَلُونَ)

Everything happens according to Allah's will, knowledge, predestination and decree. His will overpowers all other wills and His decree overpowers all stratagems. He does whatever He wills and He is never unjust. He is exalted in His purity above any evil or perdition and He is perfect far beyond any fault or flaw. "He will (not be asked about what He does, but they will be asked." (al-Anbiya' 21: 23)

وَفِي دُعَاءِ الْأَحْيَاءِ لِلْأَمْوَاتِ وَصَدَقْتَهُمْ مَنَفَعَةً لِلْأَمْوَاتِ

.89 There is benefit for dead people in the supplication and alms-giving of the living

وَاللَّهُ تَعَالَى يَسْتَجِيبُ الدَّعَوَاتِ، وَيَقْضِي الْحَاجَاتِ،

.90 Allah responds to people's supplications and gives them what they ask for

وَيَمْلِكُ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ، وَلَا يَمْلِكُهُ شَيْءٌ

وَلَا يُسْتَعْنَى عَنِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى طَرْفَةَ عَيْنٍ، وَمَنْ اسْتَعْنَى عَنِ اللَّهِ طَرْفَةَ عَيْنٍ فَقَدْ كَفَرَ، وَصَارَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْخُسْرَانِ.

Allah has absolute control over everything and nothing has any control over Him. Nothing can be independent of Allah even for the blinking of an eye, and whoever considers himself independent of Allah for the blinking of an eye is guilty of unbelief and becomes one of the people of perdition

وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى يَغْضَبُ وَيَرْضَى لَا كَأَحَدٍ مِنَ الْوَرَى

.92 Allah is angered and He is pleased but not in the same way as any creature

وَنُحِبُّ أَصْحَابَ النَّبِيِّ وَلَا نَفْرَطُ فِي حُبِّ أَحَدٍ مِنْهُمْ، وَلَا نَنْبِرُ مِنْ أَحَدٍ مِنْهُمْ وَنُبْعِضُ مَنْ يُبْعِضُهُمْ، وَبَعِيرِ الْحَقِّ لَا نَذْكُرُهُمْ؛ وَنَرَى حُبَّهُمْ دِينًا وَإِيمَانًا .  
وَإِحْسَانًا، وَبُغْضَهُمْ كُفْرًا وَشِقَاقًا وَنِفَاقًا وَطُغْيَانًا.

We love the Companions of the Messenger of Allah but we do not go to excess in our love for any one individual among them; nor do we disown any one of them. We hate anyone who hates them or does not

94. speak well of them and we only speak well of them. Love of them is a part of Islam, part of belief and part of excellent behavior, while hatred of them is unbelief, hypocrisy and rebellion

وَتُثِبَتِ الْخِلَافَةُ بَعْدَ النَّبِيِّ أَوْلَىٰ لِأَبِي بَكْرٍ الصِّدِّيقِ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ تَفْضِيلًا وَتَقْدِيمًا لِعُثْمَانَ بْنِ عَفَّانَ، عَلَىٰ جَمِيعِ الْأُمَّةِ، ثُمَّ لِعُمَرَ بْنِ الْخَطَّابِ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ، ثُمَّ لِعَلِيِّ بْنِ أَبِي الْأَيْمَّةِ الْمُهَدِّبِينَ، الَّذِينَ قَضَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَكَانُوا بِهِ يَعْدِلُونَ. طَالِبِ رِضْوَانِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِمْ أَجْمَعِينَ. وَهُمْ الْخُلَفَاءُ الرَّاشِدُونَ

We confirm that, after the death of Allah's Messenger, peace be upon him, the caliphate went first to Abu Bakr al-Siddiq, thus proving his excellence and superiority over the rest of the Muslims; then to `Umar ibn al-Khattab; then to `Uthman; and then to `Ali ibn Abi Talib; may Allah be well pleased with all of them. These .are the Rightly-Guided Caliphs and upright leaders

وَأَنَّ الْعَشْرَةَ الَّذِينَ سَمَّاهُمْ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ تَشْهَدُ لَهُمْ بِالْجَنَّةِ كَمَا شَهِدَ لَهُمْ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَقَوْلُهُ الْحَقُّ، وَهُمْ: أَبُو بَكْرٍ وَعُمَرُ وَعُثْمَانُ وَعَلِيٌّ وَطَلْحَةُ وَالزُّبَيْرُ وَسَعْدٌ . . وَسَعِيدٌ وَعَبْدُ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنُ عَوْفٍ وَأَبُو عُبَيْدَةَ بْنُ الْجَرَّاحِ، وَهُوَ أَمِينُ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ رِضْوَانِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِمْ أَجْمَعِينَ

We bear witness that the ten who were named by the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant .95 him peace, and who were promised the Garden by him, will be in the Garden, as the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, whose word is truth, bore witness that they would be. The ten are: Abu Bakr, `Umar, `Uthman, `Ali, Talha, Zubayr, Sa`d, Sa`id, `Abd al-Rahman ibn `Awf, and Abu `Ubayda ibn al-Jarrah whose .title was the Trustee of this Community, may Allah be pleased with all of them

وَمَنْ أَحْسَنَ الْقَوْلِ فِي أَصْحَابِ النَّبِيِّ وَأَزْوَاجِهِ وَذُرِّيَّاتِهِ فَقَدْ بَرِيَ مِنَ النَّفَاقِ

96. Anyone who speaks well of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and his wives and offspring, who are all pure and untainted by any impurity, is free from the .accusation of hypocrisy

وَعُلَمَاءُ السَّلَفِ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ وَالتَّابِعِينَ وَمَنْ بَعْدَهُمْ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْخَيْرِ وَالْإِثْرِ، وَأَهْلِ الْفَقْهِ وَالنَّظَرِ، لَا يُذَكَّرُونَ إِلَّا بِالْجَمِيلِ، وَمَنْ ذَكَرَهُمْ بِسَوْءٍ فَهُوَ عَلَىٰ غَيْرِ السَّبِيلِ.

The learned men of the Predecessors, both the first community and those who immediately followed: the .97 people of virtue, the narrators of hadith, the jurists, and the analysts-- they must only be spoken of in the .best way, and anyone who says anything bad about them is not on the right path

وَلَا نَفْضُلُ أَحَدًا مِنَ الْأَوْلِيَاءِ عَلَىٰ أَحَدٍ مِنَ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ. وَنَقُولُ، نَبِيٌّ وَاحِدٌ أَفْضَلُ مِنْ جَمِيعِ الْأَوْلِيَاءِ :

98. We do not prefer any of the saintly men among the Community over any of the Prophets but rather we .say that any one of the Prophets is better than all the awliya' put together

وَتُؤْمِنُ بِمَا جَاءَ مِنْ كَرَامَاتِهِمْ، وَصَحَّ عَنِ النَّقَاتِ مِنْ رِوَايَتِهِمْ

We believe in what we know of the karamat or marvels of the awliya' and in the authentic stories about .99 them from trustworthy sources

وَتُؤْمِنُ بِأَشْرَاطِ السَّاعَةِ مِنْهَا: خُرُوجُ الدَّجَالِ، وَنَزُولُ عِيسَى عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ، وَبَطْلُوعِ الشَّمْسِ مِنْ مَغْرِبِهَا، وَخُرُوجِ دَابَّةِ الْأَرْضِ مِنْ مَوْضِعِهَا.

We believe in the signs of the Hour such as the appearance of the Antichrist (*dajjal*) and the descent of .100 `Isa ibn Maryam, peace be upon him, from heaven, and we believe in the rising of the sun from where it sets .and in the emergence of the Beast from the earth

وَلَا نُصَدِّقُ كَاهِنًا وَلَا عَرَافًا، وَلَا مَنْ يَدَّعِي شَيْئًا بِخِلَافِ الْكِتَابِ وَالسُّنَّةِ وَإِجْمَاعِ الْأُمَّةِ.

We do not accept as true what soothsayers and fortune-tellers say, nor do we accept the claims of .101 those who affirm anything which goes against the Book, the Sunna, and the consensus of the Muslim .(Community (*umma*)

وَنَرَى الْجَمَاعَةَ حَقًّا وَصَوَابًا، وَالْفِرْقَةَ زَيْغًا وَعَذَابًا.

.We agree that holding together is the true and right path and that separation is deviation and torment .102

وَدِينُ اللَّهِ فِي السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاحِدٌ وَهُوَ دِينُ الْإِسْلَامِ، كَمَا قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى:

إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ

، وَقَالَ تَعَالَى:

وَمَنْ يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ الْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ

، وَقَالَ تَعَالَى:

وَرَضِيْتُ لَكُمْ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا

There is only one religion of Allah in the heavens and the earth and that is the religion of Islam .103 ("submission"). Allah says: "Surely religion in the sight of Allah is Islam." (Al `Imran 3: 19) And He also says: ("I am pleased with Islam as a religion for you." (al-Ma'ida 5: 3

وَهُوَ بَيْنَ الْغُلُوِّ وَالتَّقْصِيرِ، وَالتَّشْبِيهِ وَالتَّعْطِيلِ، وَالجَبْرِ وَالْقَدْرِ، وَالْأَمْنِ وَالْيَأْسِ.

Islam lies between going to excess and falling short, between the likening of Allah's attributes to .104 creation (*tashbih*) and divesting Allah of attributes (*ta'til*), between determinism and freewill, and between .sureness and despair

فَهَذَا دِينُنَا وَاعْتِقَادُنَا، ظَاهِرًا وَبَاطِنًا.  
وَنَحْنُ نُبْرَأُ إِلَى اللَّهِ تَعَالَى مِمَّنْ خَالَفَ الَّذِي ذَكَرْنَا، وَبَيْنَانَا.

This is our religion and it is what we believe in, both inwardly and outwardly, and we renounce any .105 .connection, before Allah, with anyone who goes against what we have said and made clear

وَنَسْأَلُ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى أَنْ يُثَبِّتَنَا عَلَيْهِ وَيَخْتَمَ الْمَذَاهِبَ الرَّدِيَّةَ، كَالْمُشَبَّهَةِ وَالْجَهْمِيَّةِ وَالْجَبْرِيَّةِ، لَنَا بِهِ، وَيَعْصِمَنَا مِنَ الْأَهْوَاءِ الْمُخْتَلِطَةِ وَالْأَرَءِ الْمُتَفَرِّقَةِ وَالْقَدْرِيَّةِ وَغَيْرِهِمْ مِمَّنْ خَالَفَ السُّنَّةَ وَالْجَمَاعَةَ، وَاتَّبَعَ الْبِدْعَةَ وَالضَّلَالَةَ، وَنَحْنُ مِنْهُمْ بَرَاءٌ، وَهُمْ عِنْدَنَا ضَلَالٌ وَأَرْذِيَاءٌ. وَاللَّهُ أَغْلَمُ بِالصَّوَابِ، وَإِلَيْهِ الْمَرْجِعُ وَالْمَأْبُ.

We ask Allah to make us firm in our belief and seal our lives with it and to protect us from variant ideas, scattering opinions and evil schools of view such as those of the Mushabbiha, the Mu` tazila, the Jahmiyya, the Jabriyya, the Qadariyya, and others like them who go against the Sunna and Jama`a and have allied themselves with error. We renounce any connection with them and in our opinion they are in error and on the path of destruction. We ask Allah to protect us from all falsehood and we ask His Grace and Favour to do all .good